

Critical Studies of Sanskrit Dramas—No. 1

THE VENĪSAMHĀRA :
A CRITICAL STUDY

BY

A. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR

Professor of Sanskrit,
Elphinstone College, Bombay

1934

Price Rupee One and Annas Four

प्राप्य तत्र निजावर्णकमन्योः
अथमभ्युत्सुमान्निः

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface		vii
I The Author		1-25
1 Personal Account of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa		1
2 The Date of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa		13
3 The Works of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa		21
4 Another Name of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa		23
II The Drama		26-78
1 The Title of the Drama		26
2 Summary of the Prologue		28
3 Critical Appreciation of the Prologue		30
4 Summary of Act i		33
5 Critical Appreciation of Act i		34
6 Summary of Prelude to Act ii		41
7 Critical Appreciation of Prelude to Act ii		42
8 Summary of Act ii		45
9 Critical Appreciation of Act ii		46
10 Summary of Interlude to Act iii		50
11 Critical Appreciation of Interlude to Act iii	...	51
12 Summary of Act iii	.	55
13 Critical Appreciation of Act iii	...	56
14 Summary of Act iv	...	62
15 Critical Appreciation of Act iv	...	64
16 Summary of Act v	...	65
17 Critical Appreciation of Act v	...	66
18 Summary of Act vi	...	69
19 Critical Appreciation of Act vi	...	72
III The Source of the Venīśambhāra and the Changes introduced therein by the Poet	...	79-89

IV	Who is the Hero of the Venīsamhāra ? ..	90—93
V	Which is the Prevailing Sentiment in the Venīsamhāra ?	94—96
VI	The Time and Place of the Dramatic Action	97—111
VII	The Five Sandhis in the Venīsamhāra	112—121
VIII	Bhatta Nārāyaṇa as a Dramatist	122—127
IX	Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's Literary Style .	128—136
X	Bhatta Nārāyaṇa and Bhavabhūti	137—140
XI	Society in Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's Days	141—147
XII	The Mode of Ancient Warfare	148—153
Appendix A—Stanzas attributed to Bhatta Nārāyaṇa		154—156
Appendix B—Difficult words in the Venīsamhāra		157—158

PREFACE

This book is a companion volume to my edition of the *Venisamhāra* that was published last year. It is at the same time the first of a Series, entitled *Critical Studies of Sanskrit Dramas*, that I have planned. Succeeding volumes will be brought out in the future year after year. I hope to publish at least a dozen of them.

The plan of the Series will be clear from this volume. I shall feel much obliged if scholars, who have occasion to read this book, will be kind enough to let me know what they think of this Series and send me any suggestions or criticism that they may have to make for its improvement.

A. B. G.

I THE AUTHOR

I PERSONAL ACCOUNT OF BHATTA NARAYANA

It is the misfortune of almost all Sanskrit poets to remain, as far as their personal history is concerned, concealed under a thick veil of obscurity or even darkness which, under the present circumstances, appears an impossible task to remove. The questions which naturally arise in the mind of a student, when he begins the study of an author, as to what kind of man he was, where he lived and how he passed his life, must, it would seem, for ever remain unanswered in the case of many of our poets. The pleasure that a student of English literature derives from the knowledge that a particular tone in the writings of his favourite poet is traceable to certain incidents in his life^(a), is denied to a student of Sanskrit. The study of a poet's life is in English almost the first thing we do in order to understand properly the spirit of his poetry, but in Sanskrit

- (a) In this connection we may mention the poems of Byron which so eminently illustrate the truth of this. In these we find a spirit of garrulousness and of discontent with and defiance of the world which does not seem to give to the poet his due. This mood of Byronism is understood and appreciated when we study the poet's life. —Similarly in the poems of Scott and also in some of his novels we note that the heroine is generally loved by two men, one of whom is doomed to failure. This fact, which strikes us so much as we read his works, becomes quite explicable when we study his life.

owing to the absence of proper materials no such thing is possible. An orthodox Pandit would even wonder what the knowledge of a poet's life had to do with the appreciation of his poetry, for he would not conceive that the one could in any way be connected with the other.

Sanskrit poets often supply a certain amount of information about themselves in their works. This tendency is particularly observable in the few poets who have written on historical subjects^(b) in direct contrast with the authors of the Kāvya or Mahākāvya, who sometimes do not even affix their names to their compositions. Buhler found an explanation of this fact in the natural desire of these poets to secure their own immortality with that of the heroes of their works^(c). Dramatists also sometimes furnish an account of themselves in the prologues to their plays. But this account even in the case of the most communicative of them^(d) does not go much beyond the mention of some of their ancestors, the place of their residence, their family name and title and a description, many a time in grandiloquent terms, of their learning. Such information of course never satisfies the student who

- (1) The seventh century poet Bāṇa is the most notable of such writers. Besides a small account of his ancestors the is given in the introductory stanzas to his Kādambarī, Bāṇa has devoted the first two Uucchvāsas, and even a portion of the third, of his Harṣacarita to his own autobiography. Similarly, the poets Bilhana, Markha and Vāṇpati have given a pretty full account of their lives, contemporaries etc. in their Vikramāṅkadevacarita, Śrībhāṇacarita and Gaudavaho respectively.

(c) Vide his Introduction to the Vikramāṅkadevacarita, p. 5

(d) Note the prologues to the plays of Bhavabhūti and especially that of his Mahāvīracarita. Also read the prologue to the Uṣṇāsūryana of Rājasekhara.

wants to know something about the poet as a man and consequently he is thrown on his own resources to gather a few pieces more from the study of the poet's work.

Bhatta Nārāyana is by no means communicative in this respect. In the prologue to his *Venisamhāra* he tells nothing about himself except that he enjoyed the title *Kavimrgarāja* (Lion among Poets) ^(c) Perhaps he thought he was well known in his days and did not feel the necessity of adding any more details about himself. Whatever that may be, the usual source of gathering bits of information about a dramatist viz the prologue to his play fails us in the case of Bhatta Nārāyana. Quite a mass of information about Bhatta Nārāyana is, however, available to us in chronicles of Bengal such as *Kṣitṭisavamaśāvalīcarita*, *Vaṅgarājaghataka*, *Rājāvalī* and *Dakṣiṇarādhīyaghataka-kārikā*. But these do not possess much historical value. At the same time it must be remarked that accounts contained in these must not be unceremoniously set aside. For it is possible to extract from them authentic pieces of information.

The first thing then that we know about Bhatta Nārāyana is that originally he belonged to Kānyakubja or Kanouj and went to settle in Bengal as the leader of four other Kānyakubja Brāhmanas at the special request of King Ādisūra. He belonged to the Śāṇḍilya gotra. As a reward for spiritual services which Bhatta Nārāyana rendered to him, King Ādisūra bestowed on this immigrant Brāhmaṇa

(c) Printed editions of the play all read 'तदिदं कवेर्मृगराजलक्ष्मणः मृदुनारायणस्य' But there is no doubt this is a corruption from 'तदिदं काव्यमृगराजलक्ष्मणः मृदुनारायणस्य' Though there is no direct Ms. evidence for this specific reading, it is significant that a Ms. reads 'कवेर्मृगराजलक्ष्मण' From this it is easy to see how the original reading must have passed through the following process of corruption : कवेर्मृगराजलक्ष्मण — कवेर्मृगराजलक्ष्मण — कवेर्मृगराजलक्ष्मण .

several villages for a nominal price.⁶¹ In course of time the number of the villages owned by Bhatta Nārāyaṇa increased with the result that in the end he attained the status of a king and became the founder of a dynasty, whose history is recorded in the *Kṣītisavamsāvalīcarita*. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa is also popularly believed to be the original ancestor of the illustrious Tagore family of Calcutta, though the members of this family are not at present able to adduce any evidence for this belief.

The five Brāhmanas, who migrated from Kāṇyakubja to Bengal, belonged to the division called Sārasvatas and consequent on their settlement in Bengal they came to be known as Gauda Sārasvatas. Thus Bhatta Nārāyaṇa was the leader of Sārasvata settlers in Bengal and thus became the founder of Gauda Sārasvata Brāhmanism in that province.

There is some doubt regarding the caste of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. Some people hold that he was a Kṣatriya and this they do on two grounds viz. (1) The *Kṣītisavamsāvalīcarita* refers to Bhatta Nārāyaṇa and his descendants as Kṣētrīyas and the word Kṣētrīya like Rājā points to the Kṣatriya caste of those to whom it is applied. (2) The epithet 'Mṛgaśālakamanah' by which Bhatta Nārāyaṇa

- (61) The number of these villages, according to the chronicles, was five. Grill thinks that the bestowal of these five villages surprisingly agrees with the demand for the same number of villages made by Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Mahābhārata* as well as in the *Vengi-sambhāra*. He therefore holds that the episode of the five villages proves that the Bhatta Nārāyaṇa of the chronicles was identical with the author of the *Vengi-sambhāra*. It must be confessed that this argument is by no means convincing. However it does not affect the identity between the two as established on other considerations.

distinguishes himself in the prologue to the *Venīsamhāra* shows that he was a Ksatriya. Mrgarājālakṣman means one whose surname or family name is Mrgarāja or Simha or Sinha. Now Simha is an addition which is usually made to the names of Ksatriyas as in Pratāpa-Simha, Jaya-Simha etc. Simha as a family name also belongs to Ksatriyas. Therefore, Bhatta Nārāyana was a Ksatriya.

It will be seen that both these grounds are unsatisfactory. First, Kṣitīśa just means a king and the word has no such connotation as Rājan possesses. Brāhmaṇa kings are not unknown even in modern times. So there is nothing wrong if the Brāhmaṇa Bhatta Nārāyana and his descendants are styled Kṣitīśas. Secondly, the elaborate edifice built on the epithet Mrgarājālakṣmanah rests on very insecure foundations. The correct form of the epithet at the outset is not Mrgarājālakṣmanah, but Kavimrgarājālakṣmanah, as we have seen before^(f). Then again lakṣman means a distinctive personal designation or title and the word consequently cannot signify a family name or surname, which is common to all members of a family. Words meaning a lion usually find a place in distinctive titles such as Kīrtana-Kesarin, Vedānta-Kesarin etc. Similarly, Kavimrgarāja was a title of the poet. It had nothing to do with his caste.

On the contrary there are positive proofs to believe that Bhatta Nārāyana was a Brāhmaṇa. First, the epithet Bhatta clearly shows that he was a Brāhmaṇa. No Ksatriya would ever be designated in this way. The contrast between bhatta and bhata is well known. Secondly, the tradition preserved in the chronicles unanimously speaks of Brāhmaṇas as having been invited by Ādisūra from Kānyakubja and Bhatta Nārāyana was the chief of these

(f) Vide foot-note (c) above on p 3

his Venīsamhāra When Drona was about to be killed, Vasāgandhā, the demoness, proposed to her husband Rudhīrapriya that they should go and drink the blood of Drona. But the demon promptly deprecated such action by remarking that Brāhmana-blood burnt the throat when drunk^(h). Such a remark in our opinion could only come from a Brāhmana author. (c) Act iii of the Venīsamhāra depicts a quarrel between Karna and Aśvatthāman. If we carefully observe the way in which this quarrel starts and proceeds, we become aware of the poet's conscious efforts to ennoble the character of the Brāhmana warrior Asvatthāman, who is made out to be chivalrous and magnanimous, and to belittle that of the Ksatriya hero Karna, who is represented as mean, ignoble and back-biting. This in our opinion clearly proceeds from the author's partiality for his caste (d) The respect and reverence which Yudhisthira and Draupadī in Act vii of the drama are made to show to Cārvāka, who goes to them in the guise of an ascetic, even when they are immersed in anxiety, indicates the author's opinion that Brāhmanas must be respected by Ksatriyas at all times and in all circumstances. This also is suggestive of the caste of Bhatta Nārāyana.

The Ksitīsavarīsāvalīcarita records a miracle which Bhatta Nārāyana and the four Kānyakubja Brāhmanas who accompanied him to the court of Ādisūra worked on their arrival in Bengal. This is known as the miracle of the Mallakāstha or wrestlers' post (Marāthī-Malakhāmba). What these Brāhmanas did was to stick consecrated mate-

(h) Read -

राक्षसी—अरे रुधिरप्रिय, किं नु सन्धेय महात् कलकलं श्रूयते ।

राक्षस —यसागन्धे, एष खलु धृष्टद्युम्नेन द्रोणः केतोश्चाकृद्भासिन्निधेयं व्यासयन् ।

राक्षसी—रुधिरप्रिय, यहि । गत्वा द्रोणस्य रुधिरं पिबाम् ।

राक्षस—नसागन्धे, ब्राह्मणशोणितं सन्धेयत् । गलं दृढदृढहृत् प्रविशति ।

तद् किमेतन् ।

—वेणीहंहर Act III, p 59

rule of worship such as dūrvā grass and grains of rice to a wretched post in five places in the evening of the day on which they went to the king's court. Next morning the doorkeepers were surprised to see that the dry post had blossomed into a green tree with branches sprouting from the five places where the consecrated materials had been planted. The miracle was no doubt intended by the immigrants to impress on their new patron and his subjects their wonderful spiritual powers. We only recapitulate the incident here to show to the reader how historically unreliable these chronicles many a time are.

We have seen that tradition is unanimous in representing Bhatta Nārāyaṇa as having migrated from Kānyakubja to Bengal. But different chronicles offer different reasons for this migration. Thus according to one account King Ādisūra once wanted to perform a Vedic sacrifice. He was however unable to obtain properly qualified priests to officiate for him in his kingdom. There certainly were some Brāhmanas well-versed in Vedic lore in Bengal but they would not undertake the task of performing a sacrifice for him, because he was a Sūdra. He consequently requested the king of Kānyakubja to send him five eminent Brāhmanas from his city. Thus Bhatta Nārāyaṇa and his four associates went to Bengal and performed a Vedic sacrifice for the Sūdra king Ādisūra. The second account says that Bengal once suffered from drought and the five Kānyakubja Brāhmanas were invited to obtain rain by means of sacrifices. According to the third Ādisūra wanted to know what sacrifice would secure for him the grace of the Almighty⁽¹⁾. As the Brāhmanas in his kingdom were unable to satisfy him on this point, he invited the five Brāhmanas from Kānyakubja. The fourth account says that an evil omen once foreshadowed a cala-

(1) 'ॐ ईशानाय नमः'—शुक्ल

unit for the province of Bengal. Ādisūra thereupon requested the five eminent Brāhmanas from Kānyakubja to go to his country and perform sacrifices with a view to avert the threatened calamity. According to the fifth and last account these Brāhmanas left Kānyakubja on account of religious persecution.

Though the versions regarding the reason why these Brāhmanas left Kānyakubja and migrated to Gauda thus differ, it is not impossible to obtain from them a consistent story. That story would seem to be that Buddhism became powerful at the court of Kānyakubja, where Brāhmanas following Vedic religion found it impossible to continue the practice of their faith. Vedic religion mainly consisted in the performance of sacrifices. As these could not be performed in Kānyakubja where the Buddhistic doctrine of ahimsā or non-slaughter prevailed, the Brāhmanas migrated to Bengal, which was the stronghold of Brahmanism and continued to perform their sacrifices there.

This story receives corroboration if we look to contemporary history. The emperor Harsa, who was born in 590 A. D., ruled over the whole of Northern India from 606 A. D. to 647 A. D. Though in his inscriptions he styles himself Paramamāheśvara,^(j) we know from a statement of Bāṇa in his Harsacarita and from the account of the Chinese traveller Hsuen Tsang that the emperor was favourably inclined towards Buddhism and actually embraced that faith towards the end of his reign. Sthānviśvara or Thanesar was the capital of Harsa in the beginning, but later on it was shifted to Kānyakubja or Kanauj. Under Harsa Brahmanism and Buddhism lived at peace, but after his death Buddhism grew aggressive at Kānyakubja and began to

(j) See the Madhuban Copperplate of Harṣa in *Epigraphia Indica* Vol I p. 67.

persecute the followers of the older religion. Even in Harsa's time Bengal was known not only as the stronghold of Brahmanism, but as an inveterate enemy of Buddhism. King Sasāṅka of Bengal had treacherously murdered Harsa's elder brother Rājyavardhana, who in his early days had accepted Buddhism and is referred to in the inscriptions as Paramasaugata. Sasāṅka hated Buddhism and did his best to extirpate it. He is known to have dug up and burnt the holy Bodhi tree at Gayā and persecuted the Buddhists in diverse way. The same pro-Brahmanic and anti-Buddhist tradition continued in Bengal after Śasāṅka. It therefore sounds quite reasonable that Brāhmanas following Vedic religion should migrate to Bengal from Kānyakubja in order to be able to follow their ancient religion of sacrifice without molestation.

A few more details about Bhatta Nārāyaṇa can be gathered from his drama. Thus we know that he was a Vaiṣṇava or devotee of Viṣṇu. Out of the three stanzas that constitute the Nāṇḍī, two are in praise of Viṣṇu, and even in the third, which glorifies Śiva, reference to Viṣṇu is made in such a manner as to bring out the superiority of the god to Śiva⁽¹⁾. Then again in the body of the drama whenever the author has occasion to speak of Kṛṣṇa, he does so in terms which unmistakably show that he holds the Yādava chief to be an avatar of Viṣṇu and looks upon

(1) 'ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय' 3. Vide our note on this passage. See also on 10 and our note thereon.

him as the highest Brahman itself⁽¹⁾. Further, like all dvaita philosophers Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa held that the best means of reaching the Lord and obtaining emancipation was undivided or sole devotion to Him⁽²⁾. Ādisūra is supposed

(1) Read in this connection the following :

- (1) 'भगवता मण्डनगोत्रभार्य्यातिनिरोधमभविष्णुता विष्णुनाथानु-
दरीत मण्डनगोत्र etc.' p. 3
- (2) 'न, न मण्डना दृष्टितविष्णुपतेज मपातमुद्भितमण्डन्य गुरु-
द्वय etc.' p. 20
- (3) 'सत्यं—भगव, विष्णु, दुग्गाता मण्डनगोत्रां पातुदेवमपि भग-
वन्त इति मण्डन गोत्रादि ।

भीमसेन — १५. मत्तं मन्त्रं दत्वा तत्रागच्छतु । पश्य ।
 तत्प्राप्त्यं विनिश्चयं विनिश्चये ममागच्छेत् ।
 ततोऽपि विनिश्चयं विनिश्चये ममागच्छेत् ।
 ततोऽपि विनिश्चयं विनिश्चये ममागच्छेत् ।
 ततोऽपि विनिश्चयं विनिश्चये ममागच्छेत् ॥ २० ॥

Act 1 p 21

- (1) 'नमः असुरमनराभिमुखस्य हरेरिषि मङ्गलं कुम्भाय भवतु ।' p 23
- (2) 'दक्षिणपार्श्विकाजीवितं विदेर्भगवति नारायणे ।' p. 155
- (3) 'पद्मिमास्य भगवता पारुदेन्द्रनोरस्य ।' p. 156
- (4) 'अथ च देवेन चक्रपाणिना देवराज्ञामप्रेषित ।' p 160
- (5) 'देवस्त्रिभुवननाथो भवति नर रथमन्दया भविष्यति ।' p 160
- (6) 'गो वि नान भगवता मादितृ विश्वरवि ।..... देवस्य देवकनिन्दनस्य-
पद्मनाभ ।' p 161
- (7) 'पुनः भगवतो नारायणस्य पद्मनाभ । पद्म मो-रीक मादितृति ।' p 175
- (8) 'अथ भगवान् पुण्डरीकाक्षो परमशक्तिरीड्य । .. देव कुतस्त्वय
विजयादुत्पद्य भगवान् पुराणपुराणो नारायण स्वयं मङ्गलान्याशान्ते ।
शृणुमङ्गलान्निर्गोभनभनमान
गुणामुदयगताशान्तेन प्रज्ञानाम ।
अजममरमपितर्यं चित्तविरहापि न तया
भवति जगति दुःखी हि पुनस्य दृष्ट्या ॥ २९ ॥ Act vi p 197
- (9) 'न किञ्चिद्वदानि भगवान् प्रथम ।' p 199

(m) 'भ्यक्तु च भयद्वर्जितं विना पुनश्च' vi 46. This stanza is sometimes so interpreted as to make out Bhatta Nārāyaṇa a follower of the Advaita School. This, we think, is entirely wrong. Vide our notes on the stanza. द्वैतविनायकं just means परान्तिका येन, so well known in the Bhāgavata Sāmpadāya.

may have to be defended, there is nothing definite in the play to show that he actually was.

Somewhat more further he tells us about Bhartṛ Nārāyaṇa's general learning from the Vedāntasūtra. As the first thing which is mentioned for the performance of a sacrifice is given by him it is printed that he was well versed in vedic ritual literature and in the science of Karma-Mīmāṃsā. The direct confirmation is the fact that he composed many works, first of all he wrote a drama based on the Mahābhārata, besides study of that great epic must have been his constant occupation. Strabo I 27 and II 47 and 48 show that a number were captured in the tent of Yogo, Sāmkhya and Vaiśiṣṭy Philosophy. In his dramas Bhartṛ Nārāyaṇa has shown a liberal view of spirit of epoch, we conclude that he has studied the Hindu literature as well. The date of his travels for finding out the whereabouts of Durgadevī, which Yodhātura issues at the commencement of Act III, shows that Bhartṛ Nārāyaṇa must have studied a good deal of history such as the Arthashastra of Kauṭilya.

In concluding this section on the Personal Account of the Author we desire to state that we have taken it for granted that Bama's Narrative, who according to the Bengal

(c) \mathbb{R}^n

[illegible]

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

二二二—(1617) 丁巳年

[illegible]

आत्माग्रे वदन्नुपि च न भगवान् वदोपदेशा हरिः

मध्याह्नपराधीनि ते नम्यन्ते पाशे मृद्दिगध्या ।

मंदाग्रा पद्मव त्रिधातुविधौशोभशा ३ कठं

राजं नृपतिं तमसि रमति शक्तिं दशोदयति ॥ २५ ॥

Act 1

chronicles, was invited by Ādisūra from Kānyakubja was identical with the author of the Venīsamhāra. The chronological position, which the Venīsamhāra occupies in Sanskrit literature, does not militate against this identification. It must at the same time be pointed out that none of the chronicles says that the Brāhmaṇa Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, who was invited by Ādisūra, was a poet and the author of the Venīsamhāra.

2 THE DATE OF BHATTA NĀRĀYAṆA

Ancient Indians achieved eminence in many departments of learning, but they lacked historical sense. This may perhaps be so because they were not much interested in the affairs of this world, which they regarded only as a place of preparation for the next. Whatever that may be, there is much truth in Max Müller's remark that history in the ordinary sense of the word is unknown to Indian literature. The result of this is that the dates of Sanskrit poets are far from being precisely settled. We consider ourselves fortunate if we are able to assign a poet to a particular century or at best to the first or second half thereof. Sometimes dates once fixed have to be revised in the light of new evidence subsequently discovered. 'All dates given in Indian history,' says Whitney, 'are pins set up to be booted down again.'¹

Two kinds of evidence are usually relied upon in determining the dates of Sanskrit authors viz internal and external. Internal evidence takes the form of a reference to, or quotation from, a previous writer by the author in question in his works. Such reference or quotation gives us the *terminus a quo* or the backward limit for the date of the author. External evidence consists in a reference to or

(1) *Indian History*, 1st Edition; Grammar by Whitney, p. xix

quotation from the author by some subsequent writer and it supplies the *terminus ad quem* or the forward limit, later than which the author cannot be supposed to have flourished.

As regards internal evidence the *Veniśambhāra* of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa does not furnish any. There is no reference in it to any previous author. No other work of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, where such evidence can be sought, is also available. But we possess ample evidence to determine the *terminus ad quem* for the *Veniśambhāra*. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's drama proved very popular with writers on Sanskrit rhetoric or *Alamkāraśāstra*. They quoted from it on many occasions to illustrate different topics in their works. The most eminent of these writers, chronologically arranged, are Vāmana (750-800 A. D.), Ānandavardhana (840-870 A. D.), Dhanañjaya (950 A. D.), Bhojarāja (1005-1054 A. D.), Ksemendra (1025-1075 A. D.), Mammata (1100 A. D.) and Viśvanātha (1350 A. D.)^(q). It is not necessary to go into the details of the quotations from the *Veniśambhāra* that are found in the works of all these rhetoricians. We shall only refer to Vāmana who is the earliest of these writers and is assigned to the latter half of the eighth century. In his *Kāvyaślokaśūtrasūtra* Vāmana has quoted from the *Veniśambhāra* at least four times. Once he quotes a line to illustrate the figure *Sahokti*^(r) and three times more he notes and defends three ungrammatical forms of Bhaṭṭa

(q) The dates, which are given in parenthesis, do not represent the span of life of the various writers, or the year of their birth or death, but the period in which or the year about which the literary activity of the authors lay.

(r) Read 'यस्तुद्वयस्य क्रियोस्तुल्यकालयोरेकेन पदेनाभिधानं सहशब्दसामर्थ्यात् सहोक्तिः । यथा "अस्तं भास्वान् प्रयात. सह रिपुभिरयं संहियन्तां चलानि"' (Ve v. 36d) under काव्यालंकारसूत्र 4 3. 28.

Nārāyaṇa¹) Thus it is settled that the date of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa is some time anterior to 750 A. D.

A piece of external evidence may be used in the case of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa to obtain the *terminus a quo* or the backward limit also, though this evidence cannot be considered to be of a conclusive character. In the introductory stanzas to his Harśacarita Bāṇa mentions some of his distinguished predecessors in the domain of poetry either by their names or by their works¹) If Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa had preceded Bāṇa, he would have been referred to by him. But Bāṇa does not mention either our poet or his drama. This means that Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa came after Bāṇa. Bāṇa flourished in the first half of the seventh century. Putting together the results of these two pieces of external evidence we come to the conclusion that Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa must have lived some time between 650 and 750 A. D.

(3) Read "सुत्रं हि सन्नेन" (Ve ii 19—Here the reading adopted in our text is "नीमं हि सन्नेन"). अथ सुत्र-
म्हं इति निश्चयेन । उच्यते इति सन्नेन स्यात् ।' under 5 2 48,
'निश्चयेन स्यात् । इति सन्नेन स्यात् ।' under 5 2 49,
'निश्चयेन स्यात् । इति सन्नेन स्यात् ।' under 5 2 50—Here our reading is "सन्नेन स्यात्" (Ve i p
20—Here our reading is "सन्नेन स्यात्") under 5 2 77,
and "सन्नेन स्यात्" (Ve iii 41—Here our reading is
"सन्नेन स्यात्") under 5 2 82.

(4) These writers are in all nine viz Vyāsa, the author of the Mahābhārata; Bhaṭṭa Haricandra, Sātavāhana, Pravarāṇa, Bhāṇa, Kālidāsa, the author of the Brhat-kathā and Adhyātma. It will be noticed that one notable omission in this list is Vālmīki. Surely, the Rāmāyaṇa must have existed in Bāṇa's days and Vālmīki certainly deserved note. Why he was not mentioned we cannot say. That is why we have remarked above that this piece of evidence cannot be considered to be of a conclusive character.

Three other considerations confirm this conclusion. We have seen before that according to Bengal tradition Bhatta Nārāyana was the chief of the Kānyakubja Brāhmanas who had been invited to settle in that province by King Ādisūra. The date of Ādisūra is not definitely fixed. But he is regarded as the traditional progenitor of the Sena Dynasty, which according to Cunningham^(u) reigned in Bengal between 650 and 1108 A. D. Ādisūra thus must have reigned in the latter half of the seventh century A. D. and Bhatta Nārāyana, who was his contemporary according to tradition, must consequently be assigned to the same period.

In Hiuen Tsang's account of his travels a king of Nepal of the name of Amsuvarman is mentioned. His sister Bhogadevi was married to a Prince Sūrasena. This Sūrasena is identified with Ādisūra, the founder of the Sena Dynasty. Amsuvarman is known to have ruled about 644-652 A. D.^(v) This gives the latter half of the seventh century as the period of Ādisūra and consequently that of our poet.

The second consideration which confirms this date is derived from contemporary history. We have seen before that religious persecution was the reason that induced Bhatta Nārāyana and his associates to migrate from Kānyakubja to Bengal. It has also been shown above that Buddhism was in the ascendant in Kānyakubja in the second half of the seventh century. This consequently must have been the period in which our author migrated to

(u) See Reports of the Archaeological Survey of India by Cunningham, Vol. XV, Appendix. Note on the History of Bengal.

(v) See Beal's Buddhist Records of the Western World, Vol. II, p. 81, foot-note 102.

Bengal from Kāṅyakuṇḍya where the practice of the ancient Vedic religion of sacrifice involving slaughter of animals, must have been forbidden.

The third consideration refers to the style and the general construction of the drama. These indicate that Bhavā Nārāyaṇa belonged to what may be styled the age of Bhavabhūti.¹ Bhavabhūti flourished towards the end of the seventh and the beginning of the eighth century, that is sometime between 675 and 725 A. D. It cannot be known whether Bhavā Nārāyaṇa was a predecessor, contemporary or successor of Bhavabhūti. But we shall not be wrong in assigning him to the second half of the seventh century.

From the above it will be seen that various considerations point to the second half of the seventh century as the date of Bhavā Nārāyaṇa.

A few other matters connected with this topic may be mentioned before concluding this section.

The Kṛtsavamsāhita contains the history of the dynasty of which Bhavā Nārāyaṇa is supposed to be the founder. We therefore naturally look to this book for determining the date of our poet. But as we remarked some chapters of this kind do not possess much historical value. This is proved by the date which the Kṛtsavamsāhita gives for Bhavā Nārāyaṇa. According to this work King Aditya settled Bhavā Nārāyaṇa and his associates in his kingdom in the Sanskrit year 999 which is 1077 A. D. As Vāmana, who flourished in the latter half of

(1) The style and the construction of the drama point to the age of Bhavabhūti. See also X. Bhavā Nārāyaṇa and Bhavabhūti.

(2) The Kṛtsavamsāhita gives the date of the settlement of Bhavā Nārāyaṇa and his associates in the Sanskrit year 999 which is 1077 A. D. As Vāmana, who flourished in the latter half of

the eighth century A. D., quotes from the *Veniśamhāra*, eleventh century can obviously not be accepted as the date of our author. Rejendra Lal Mitra's 1072 A. D. as the correct date of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa has also to be rejected for the same reason.

Wilson gives 'about the eighth or ninth century' as the probable period of the composition of the *Veniśamhāra*. If the expression 'about the eighth' means the period comprising, say, 675 to 725 A. D., Wilson is right. Ninth century is of course out of question for the same reason which rules out the date given by the *Kṣitīśavamśāvalī-carita*. At the same time it must be confessed that Wilson's fixing the date of the *Veniśamhāra* as 'about the eighth or ninth century' was certainly admirable, for we must remember that he wrote more than a hundred years ago,^(y) when materials for discussing such problems were extremely scanty.

We now quote Wilson's remarks on this question. Says he, 'There is nothing in the play to furnish a clue to its date. It is frequently cited in the *Kāvya-Prakāśa*, the *Daśa-Rūpaka*, and *Sāhitya-Darpana*, to which works it is consequently anterior. According to tradition, the author, Bhatta Nārāyaṇa, was one of the Kanouj Brāhmanas invited into Bengal by Ādi-Sura, from whom the Brāhmanas of that province are descended; he was of the Śāṇḍilya family. Ādi-Sura is supposed to have reigned three centuries before our era; but if we may place any dependence on Abulfazl's list of Bengal kings, he was the twenty-second prince in descent from Belāl Sen, who, it is well known, reigned in the thirteenth century. Assigning then the moderate dura-

(y) The first edition of Wilson's well-known work 'Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindus' was published in 1827.

tion of about three hundred years to these intermediate princes, and admitting the tradition with respect to Bhatta Nārāyaṇa, the Venī-samhāra might have been written about the eighth or ninth century a period not at all incompatible with the comparative harshness of its style and the rudeness of its execution, particularly if we conclude, agreeably to tradition, that it was among the earliest results of the introduction of Brahmanical literature into Bengal^(a)

Julius Grill in the *Kritische Einleitung* (Critical Introduction)⁽¹⁾ to his edition of the Venīsamhāra, published in 1871, discusses the question of the date of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa and comes to the conclusion that our poet must have lived in the sixth or seventh century A D

Max Muller suggested^(b) that Bhadrānārāyaṇa, who is mentioned in the Harsacarita as a companion of Bāna in his wanderings was identical with Bhatta Nārāyaṇa This makes our poet a contemporary of Bāna

(a) 'Theatre of the Hindus' Vol II, p 343-344 In the above quotation proper names have been transliterated according to modern system

(1) English translation of Grill's *Kritische Einleitung* by L R Vaidya was published in his edition of the Venīsamhāra by N. B. Godbole (1895) under the heading 'Ink Memorandum by L R Vaidya'

(b) Max Muller's suggestion was as a matter of fact based on inaccurate reading of the passage concerned. Among the companions of Bāna's wanderings are mentioned 'अदिने मन्नागदगी' मन्नागदगी was evidently mis-read by Max Muller as मन्नागदगी, which he suggested was identical with मन्नागदगी

3 THE WORKS OF BHATTA NĀRĀYANA

The Venīsamhāra is the only work of Bhatta Nārāyana that is at present known to us. But there are reasons to believe that he must have written other works as well. In the Introduction to the Venīsamhāra some Mss speak of the drama as 'a new composition'^(c) of the poet. This means that Bhatta Nārāyana was the author of some other drama or dramas. What this drama or these dramas were that preceded the composition of the Venīsamhāra we have no means of finding out in the present state of our knowledge.

The Daśakumāracarita, which goes under the name of Dandin, is known to be the work of more than one author^(d). It consists of the Pūrvapīthikā, the Daśakumāracarita (proper) and the Uttarapīthikā or Śesa. Of these only the Daśakumāracarita (proper) is the work of Dandin. Two versions^(e) of the Pūrvapīthikā are at present available. From a stanza occurring at the end of a Ms of the second, but little known, version we learn that it is the work of Bhatta Nārāyana and that the scribe Hariśarma wrote it,

(c) See Grill's edition, p 129, where the readings 'अभिनवकृतिम्' and 'कृतिमभिनवाम्' for 'कृतिम्' in the passage 'मृदुनारायणस्य कृतिवैणीसंहार नाम नाटक प्रयोक्तुमुद्यता वयम्' (p 3 our edition) are given

(d) Vide Section X entitled 'The Authors of the Daśakumāracarita' from the Introduction to our edition of the Daśakumāracarita

(e) The first and well-known version is the one that is usually printed in the current editions of the Daśakumāracarita. The second version was unknown till 1919, when it was published as an Appendix by the late Mr G J Agashe to the Second Revised Edition of the Daśakumāracarita in the Bombay Sanskrit and Prakrit Series

because he could not secure the original Pūrvapīṭhikā of Dandin⁽⁷⁾ Now no other poet bearing the name Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa is known. So we may presume that this Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa is identical with our author. This means that besides the Venīsamhāra our author wrote a Pūrvapīṭhikā to complete the incomplete Dasakumāracarita of Dandin.

Vallabhadeva (about the fifteenth century) quotes in his Subhāsitāvalī seven stanzas under the name Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, and one more under the name Nārāyaṇa, which also is considered by Peterson to belong to our author. Out of these eight stanzas⁽⁸⁾ only one viz. No 79 occurs in the Venīsamhāra as one of the three stanzas⁽⁹⁾, which constitute the Nāṇḍī according to some Mss. These three stanzas are not incorporated in the text of any of the printed editions, but are always noted as variants to three others which are recognised as forming the proper Nāṇḍī of the drama. Now these seven stanzas, which Vallabhadeva quotes as Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's, must have come from some other work or works of our author, which are at present unknown to us.

Sārngadhara (1363 A. D.) in his anthology known as Sārngadharapaddhati quotes nine stanzas⁽¹⁰⁾ under the name

(7) Read

भृङ्गायाम्भूतं पूर्वपितृदशमम् ।

अथ च इतिदिनित् इतिदिना पञ्चीति यत् ॥

—भृङ्गायाम्भूत Appendix p 155 (Bombay Sanskrit Series)

- (8) All stanzas which are attributed to our author in anthologies, but which are not found in the extant text of the Venīsamhāra, are collected in Appendix A to this book.
- (9) For these three stanzas see Notes p 10 of our edition of the Venīsamhāra.
- (10) See stanzas Nos 173, 3972, 3981, 4073, 4074, 4081, 4085, 4086 and 4088 from the Sārngadharapaddhati.

Nārāyaṇa Bhatta and these are all found in the Venīsamhāra. He has again quoted two stanzas⁽¹⁾ more, which in other anthologies are found under the name of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. One of these is the same as No. 79 of the Subhāsitāvalī, which we have seen forms one of the three stanzas that constitute a variant Nāṇḍī. The other is not found in the extant text of the Venīsamhāra, but is supposed to occur in a Telugu Ms of the play.

A drama, called Jānakīparinaya, is mentioned in a catalogue of Mss as the work of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa⁽²⁾. Not having seen the Ms, we are unable to say whether this Bhatta Nārāyaṇa is the same as our author. If he be the same, the Jānakīparinaya would be another drama of our author.

4. ANOTHER NAME OF BHATTA NĀRĀYAṆA

Nārāyaṇa is a very common name in India and Bhaṭṭa is an honorific title implying eminence in learning. Bhaṭṭa is specially assumed by those who achieve distinction in Alamkārasāstra or the science of rhetoric. Numerous writers of the name of Nārāyaṇa are known. Aufrecht in his Catalogus Catalogorum mentions quite a number of them. But Bhatta Nārāyaṇa appears to be the exclusive name of the author of the Venīsamhāra.

We have seen before that the Sārṅgadharapaddhati quotes nine stanzas from the Venīsamhāra under the name Nārāyaṇa Bhatta. This indicates that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa was sometimes referred to as Nārāyaṇa Bhatta as well. This latter form of the name can however not be regarded

(1) These are stanzas Nos 135 and 4009. For these see Appendix A.

(2) See Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts in Mysore and Coorg by Lewis Rice (1884) p 256.

he gained this title because he composed a line in which the word Bhavabhūti figured prominently⁽ⁿ⁾. Ācārya Dīksita, the grand father of Appayya Dīksita, was known by the title Vaksasthalācārya. King Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya of Vijayanagara (1509-1530 A. D.) once visited Kāñcī. As he sat before the idol of Varada (a name of Viṣṇu) in company with his wife, worshipping the deity, Ācārya Dīksita composed a stanza, which contained a flattering reference to the beauty of Kṛṣṇa Deva Rāya's queen^(o). This pleased the Vijayanagara king so much that he decreed that the author be thence-forward known as Vaksasthalācārya.

- (n) The line, which according to some secured for Śrīkantha the title Bhavabhūti, is either 'साम्ना पुनातु भवभूतिपदिनस्युति' or 'विजिताया दुष्प्री दन्ते मयभूतिमिताननी'. It seems clear that those lines arose after the name rather than the name sprang from the lines.

- (o) This stanza runs as follows

वाचित् वाञ्छन्महाराज्ञी धीक्ष्य साक्षाद्वि त्रियम् ।

वन्द्य मदादापन्नो वक्ष्य स्थलमेवसत ॥

The significance of the stanza will be understood if we remember that Viṣṇu is supposed to have Lakṣmī permanently residing on his chest. When therefore the God saw before him a lady, who seemed to be Lakṣmī incarnate, he wondered whether the Goddess had left her usual place and looked at his chest to make sure that she was there. The ultimate idea in the stanza is that the queen was so like Lakṣmī that even Varada mistook her for his wife.

II THE DRAMA

I THE TITLE OF THE DRAMA

Venīsamhāra^(p), the title of this drama, means the tying up or rearrangement of the loose dishevelled mass of hair. It has reference to the vow of Bhīmasena, which forms the central topic of the drama. In suggesting to us the nature of this vow Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa has introduced a change of far-reaching consequence in the original account of the Mahābhārata and in order to call special attention to this change we are devoting a separate section to this title.

In that notorious gambling match between the Pāṇḍavas and the Kauravas, Yudhiṣṭhira lost all his wealth and possessions owing to the deceitful tricks of Śakani. Ultimately he staked himself and his brothers and even his wife and when he was defeated in the game once more, the Pāṇḍavas and their queen became the slaves of the Kauravas. Duryodhana thereupon ordered Draupadī to be brought into the assembly. She refused on the ground that she was not in a fit condition to go there. Duryodhana then sent his brother Dussāsana to bring her. He dragged her by her hair into the hall in spite of her protestations and pulled her only garment in his attempt to strip her naked. Duryodhana had already bared his thigh and showed it to the Pāṇḍava princess, intimating thereby his desire that she should occupy it. Bhīmasena's ire was roused. By all the holy things in the world he vowed that for those indignities

(p) There are three grammatical and three exegetical explanations of the title Venīsamhāram. For these see Notes to our edition, pp 1-4

reaped upon Draupadī he would tear open the chest of Dussāsana and drink his blood and that he would break the thighs of Duryodhana with his mace, kick him on his head and *with his hands smeared with the blood of Duryodhana rearrange the dishevelled hair of Draupadī, who was therefore to allow her hair to remain in that disordered condition till he fulfilled his vow.* It is to this latter part of Bhīmasena's vow, concerning the rearrangement of Draupadī's dishevelled hair with hands gory with Duryodhana's blood, that reference is made in the title of the drama

We desire to point out here that that particular portion of Bhīmasena's vow (printed in *Italics* above), which is referred to in the title of the drama, finds no sanction in the *Mahābhārata*. There is no reference to it in the *Sabhāparvan*, which describes the gambling, the dragging into the assembly of Draupadī and the various vows of the Pāṇḍava princes. In the *Salpayarvan* also, which describes the slaughter of Duryodhana by Bhīmasena, we find no mention of Draupadī's dishevelled hair being tied by Bhīmasena with hands smeared with Duryodhana's blood. Further, in the description of the life the Pāṇḍavas led in the forest and in the capital of Virāṭa there is no reference to Draupadī's allowing her hair to continue disordered with a view to their being ultimately rearranged by Bhīmasena in the manner stated above. From the *Sabhāparvan* onwards Bhīmasena has repeated his vow on many occasions, but nowhere is there any reference to his having vowed to rearrange Draupadī's dishevelled hair with hands stained with Duryodhana's blood. It would therefore appear that this part of Bhīmasena's vow is Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's own addition and it is easy to see that from the dramatic point of view it is of the utmost importance. But this fact does not appear to have struck any of the previous editors or annotators of the drama.

That this addition of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa to Bhīmasena's vow has had immense influence on subsequent literature and on people's ideas about this episode from the Mahābhārata can be easily seen. Numerous dramas dealing with the life of Draupadī and of the Pāṇḍavas subsequent to the incidents of the Sabhāparvan have been written in modern Indian languages. And everywhere Draupadī has been depicted as allowing her hair to hang loosely on her back, because she was not to tie them up till Bhīmasena killed Duryodhana and rearranged them with hands gory with his blood. On the stage whenever Draupadī appears, her hair hang loosely on her back. People are hardly aware that this condition of Draupadī is due to Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's innovation and that the Mahābhārata knows nothing about it. On the contrary the general belief is that in the Mahābhārata itself Bhīmasena's vow was exactly as Bhatta Nārāyaṇa depicts it to be. Such has been the tremendous influence of the Venīsamhāra on men's ideas about the Mahābhārata.

A similar case may be quoted to illustrate how a dramatist's work influences people's ideas about historical facts. Shakespeare portrays Henry V as his ideal man of action. English boys and girls learn their English history more from Shakespeare's dramas than from regular history books. Consequently they have grand ideas about Henry V, but we know that history has a different verdict to bring about this monarch.

We now proceed to give a summary of the drama act by act and add to it our critical appreciation.

2 SUMMARY OF THE PROLOGUE

At the beginning of the drama we have the Prastāvanā or the Prologue, which commences with the usual mangala, here consisting of three stanzas. Two of these are in

glorification of Lord Viṣṇu, while the third is in praise of Śiva. After this the Sūtradhāra enters and offers his own salutation to Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa, the author of the Bhārata. He then informs the audience that he is going to represent Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's drama, the Venīsamhara, and requests that attention be paid to his performance either out of regard for the labours of the poet, or out of reverence for the sublime plot, or out of curiosity to witness a new drama.

Just at this moment the Pāripāśvika, Assistant of the Sūtradhāra, announces to him from behind the curtain the command of Vidura, issued to all actors, to open festivities forthwith, for it is the time for the arrival of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who has, through desire for the good of the family of Bharata, assumed the role of a mediator and is about to start for Duryodhana's camp with the intention of negotiating peace. The Sūtradhāra is glad to learn this news and asks his Assistant to begin the concert.

The Pāripāśvika now enters and inquires to which season the song should refer. The Sūtradhāra replies that it should refer to the autumn and himself proceeds to describe it. His description of the season, owing to its double-meaning phraseology, suggests the fall of the Dhārtarāstras. The Assistant is much agitated by this suggestion. The Sūtradhāra points out to him the other meaning of his words and in order further to allay his perturbation invokes blessing on the Kauravas in another double-meaning stanza. This brings on him from behind the curtain a severe rebuke from Bhīmasena, for he cannot stand peace with the hated Kauravas, who have wronged the Pāṇḍavas and their queen so grievously, and therefore does not like Kṛṣṇa's mediation. The Sūtradhāra and his Assistant immediately quit the stage in order to escape from the gaze of the enraged Bhīmasena, whose entrance is thus cleverly intimated.

3 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF THE PROLOGUE

The dramatic purpose of a Prologue is briefly to introduce the poet and the play and to prepare the audience for witnessing the piece to follow. Before the play actually starts the audience becomes very impatient and sometimes even rowdy and there is a lot of noise created in the theatre. The Prastāvanā must be able to quiet the audience and capture its attention. With this view dramatists often introduce singing, or create expectations thereof in the mind of the audience by referring to it, for singing exercises such fascinating influence over the human mind. Thus in the *Sākuntala* while the assembly is still under the influence of the Nati's enchanting melody, Duryanta enters and the play begins. Here also we find that just after the formal introduction of the poet is over, expectations of a musical concert are raised by the announcement of the *Pāripārsyika* and while the audience eagerly looks up to it, the *Sūtradhāra* makes a sensational reference to the fall of the *Dhātaraśtras* in his description of the autumn to which the song is to pertain. The attention of the assembly is thus diverted in an altogether different channel and the dialogue between the *Sūtradhāra* and his Assistant is eagerly listened to. The entrance of *Bhīmasena* is again very cleverly effected by means of another paronomastic stanza and the play begins. The interest of the audience is thus nowhere allowed to flag.

Another characteristic of the *Prastāvanā* is that it should be short. Some dramatists make it unnaturally long by introducing all kinds of discussions in it. A long-drawn *Prastāvanā*^(c) tires the audience which has a right to say that it has assembled to witness the drama and not

(c) See for example the *Prastāvanā* of the *Prasannaṭṭhava* which contains no less than twenty-three stanzas.

to listen to the views of the poet on sundry matters, or to hear an exaggerated account of his greatness and learning. Kālidāsa's Prastāvanā to his Śākuntala is an ideal one from this point of view. The present Prastāvanā appears a little too long. But that was inevitable. For, this Prastāvanā is more than a Prologue proper. It unites in it the characteristics of a Viskambhaka as well. The plot of this drama is taken from the Mahābhārata, the story in which is so long that it was absolutely necessary to inform the audience where exactly the action of the drama began. This necessitated a few more speeches than would otherwise have been necessary. It is to be noted that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa has constructed his Prastāvanā with great skill. There is nothing unnatural about it and it satisfies all the requirements so admirably.

Reading between the lines of the Prastāvanā one is always able to form some ideas regarding the dramatist's position in the literary world. This Prastāvanā does not reveal Bhatta Nārāyaṇa as having attained any very great literary eminence. He does not even appear to feel sure that the audience would give him a patient hearing. He has therefore to plead, more or less helplessly, even like Kālidāsa in his Vikramorvaśīyam, that attention may, for one reason or another, be kindly paid to his performance.^(r) There seems to be no doubt that when Bhatta Nārāyaṇa wrote this passage, he had Kālidāsa's Vikramorvaśīya stanza before him. Kālidāsa's influence on Bhatta Nārāyaṇa is visible in this Prastāvanā in another place also. When the Pāripārśvika enters, he asks the Sūtradhāra, 'Concerning which season should the song be sung?' The

(r) With Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's 'तत्र कविपरिश्रमादुरोधाद्वा उदात्तकथावस्तु-
गौरवाद्वा नवनाटकदर्शनेनकुतूहलाद्वा भवद्विस्मयान् दयिमानमम्यर्थये' compare
Kālidāsa's 'प्रणयिषु वा साक्षिण्यादथवा सद्गुणैरुपवद्गुणानात् । शृणुन् मनो-
मिखहिते क्रियामिमां कालिदासस्य' V 1 2 .

Sūtradhāra answers by saying that the song should refer to the autumn, which has just set in. All this appears to be almost an exact copy of the dialogue between the Sūtradhāra and the Natī in the Sākuntala ^(s)

A dramatic Prastāvanā is, according to writers on rhetoric, of five kinds. The Prastāvanā of the Venīsamhāra belongs to the Kathodghāta type, which is one of these five ^(u). The Kathodghāta Prastāvanā is that in which a character makes his entrance on the stage, repeating a sentence of the Sūtradhāra or making reference to what the Sūtradhāra has said. In the Venīsamhāra Bhīmasena enters, repeating a few words of the Sūtradhāra and expressing his resentment at the general tenor of the Sūtradhāra's stanza ^(u). The Prastāvanās of the Ratnāvalī and the Mudrārāksasa also belong to this Kathodghāta type.

(s) Compare the following —

नटी—अयं त्वमपि पुनर्मुनिपि कृत्य मास्वानि ।

सूत्रधार — नन्वहमेव तावदपि गृह्यचक्षुरभोजनं ग्रीष्मसमयमपि कृत्य गयितवान् ।
नंगति हि ।

—अभिज्ञानशाकुन्तल १

पारियात्रिक — मयि । आत्मदामि । वनं समञ्जसाश्रितं गीतवान् ।

सूत्रधार — नन्वमुन्य तावत् शरत्समयमाश्रित्य प्रवर्तयतीं संगीतकम् ।
तथा यस्मां शङ्कति ।

—येगीसहार १

(t) Read

उद्भवतः यद्येवमनं प्रयोगविशेषमया ।

प्रवर्तयामि पश्य प्रस्तावनाभिद ॥ ३३

सुशकारस्य यत्नं वा सुनादायार्थमन्य वा ।

नन्वेव पादप्रवेशेन कथोद्धातं स उच्यते ॥ ३५

—माहित्यदर्पण ११

(u) The Sūtradhāra says in 1. 7d 'सन्ध्या मयन्तु कुरुराजपुत्रा सन्ध्या'. Bhīmasena's words in 1. 8d are 'सन्ध्या मयन्ति नपि जीवति पतिगृहे'.

4 SUMMARY OF ACT i

The Pāṇdavas have fulfilled the condition of twelve years' residence in the forest and further one year's residence *incognito*. Duryodhana is yet unwilling to restore to them their legitimate share of kingdom. Both sides prepare for war. The pious Yudhisthira becomes alarmed at the prospect of the impending calamity and a last attempt to settle matters amicably is determined upon. Lord Śrīkrṣṇa is chosen as the mediator of peace and he has already departed on his mission. Everybody is looking forward to the expected peace with a feeling of relief. But Prince Bhīmasena is of another mind. He cannot stand peace with the hated Kauravas and consequently does not like the Lord's departure for Duryodhana's camp. His ire is roused when he finds the Sūtradhāra exulting in the prospect of peace and in a mood of bitter resentment he makes his entrance on the stage, followed by his beloved brother Sahadeva, and the drama proper begins.

Sahadeva tries to allay the anger of Bhīmasena, but Bhīmasena is not in a mood to listen to any argument. He is even ready to revolt against the authority of Yudhisthira and wants to destroy the Kauravas single-handed. In rage he starts for the armoury, for which he mistakes Draupadī's quadrangle. On being reminded of his mistake, he decides to wait for the Queen's arrival, for he wants to take leave of her before embarking upon the task of effecting his fell revenge. Sahadeva in the meanwhile tries to explain to him the circumstances under which and the motive with which Yudhisthira made his overtures of peace and informs him of the condition viz the grant of five villages, on which peace is sought to be effected. Bhīmasena flouts his words, and being most painfully surprised at Yudhisthira's low demand, absolutely refuses to associate himself with such peace.

At this juncture Draupadī makes her entrance. Tears are rising in her eyes. Sahadeva fears that her sight would add fuel to the already blazing fire of Bhīmasena's anger. And what had happened was this. Draupadī along with her co-wives had gone to pay customary obeisance to Gāndhārī. On her way back she was seen by Duryodhana's wife Bhānumatī, who made a cruel and insulting reference to her loose hair which, she said, must now be tied, in view of the peace that the Pāṇdavas were striving to bring about by means of only five villages. This is too much for the already excited Bhīmasena, who, while impatiently rising from his seat, declares that in a short time he will break the thighs of Duryodhana and tie up Draupadī's hair with hands gory with his blood.

Behind the curtain a great noise is heard and a drum is loudly beaten. A Chamberlain enters in haste and informs Bhīmasena that Lord Kṛṣṇa has returned, his mission having proved unsuccessful, and that Yudhiṣṭhira has ordered hostilities to be commenced forthwith. Taking an affectionate farewell of their Queen, Bhīmasena and Sahadeva then depart in order to have an interview with Kṛṣṇa and Yudhiṣṭhira.

5 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF ACT I

The first Act of the Venīsamhāra is from the dramatic point of view highly successful. Except for two matters^(a)

- (a) The first is connected with the use of the word कृष्णागमनम् in the passage 'अत्रोपविश्याय पादयत्तु कृष्णागमनम्' p. 10 (Text). For the objectionable feature in this passage see pp. 36-37 Notes. The second point refers to the significance that Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa attaches to Yudhiṣṭhira's demand of five villages and that is explained to Bhīmasena by Sahadeva on pp. 13-14 (Text). For the confusion which Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa has created in the explanation of this significance see pp. 42-44 (Notes).

there is here nothing defective. 'Rules' of 'Sanskrit' dramaturgy do not allow the division of an Act into scenes. An Act constitutes so to say one long scene, for the stage is not to be left vacant during its course. Yet it is always possible for the purposes of criticism to look upon an Act as made of a certain number of scenes and the dramatist's skill of plot-construction lies in the way in which he weaves these scenes together so as to create the impression of a consistent Act, free from all artificialities.

The first Act consists of three scenes. The first scene contains the conversation between Bhīmasena and Sahadeva, and ends with stanza 14. The second is very small and is made up by the short dialogue between Draupadī and her maid and closes with Draupadī's decision to stay in a secluded place and listen to what Bhīmasena has to say in his angry mood. The third scene is the longest in the Act and extends from Bhīmasena's speech at the bottom of p. 12 to the end of the Act on p. 24.

It will be seen that these three scenes have been very cleverly managed. They follow one another with logical precision. The way in which Bhatta Nārāyaṇa has brought about the meeting of Bhīmasena and Draupadī is so skilful. Enraged at Yudhisṭhira's attempts to make peace and determined on breaking loose from his authority and on wrecking his vengeance single-handed, Bhīmasena naturally turns his steps toward the armoury, where he wants to provide himself with his terrible mace. But rage deceives him regarding the exact locality of the arsenal and he finds himself before Draupadī's quadrangle. This is a very fine and natural touch. As his revolt against Yudhisṭhira's authority proceeds from his high regard for Draupadī, whose wrongs he intends to avenge, it is quite natural that he should desire to bid farewell to her before embarking on his mission. He is therefore glad to realise his mistake and

tries to see the Queen. All this is so natural. Then again the way in which in spite of himself, Bhīmasena is led to inquire about the condition on which peace is sought to be effected viz. the introduction of the expression Kṛsnāgamānam, marks the poet's skill. The anger into which Bhīmasena flies, when he learns the condition of five villages, so natural in itself, is very cleverly exploited by the poet to serve a dramatic purpose. Draupadī is now to enter and a difficulty arises viz. What are Bhīmasena and Sahadeva to do on the stage during the time taken by the dialogue between Draupadī and her maid, which forms the second scene in this Act? Are they to stand still on the stage, blankly looking about here and there? This would have been highly inartistic. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa therefore very ingeniously makes Bhīmasena turn his face away from Sahadeva in anger and represents him as keeping silent for a time, because, overpowered by rage, he is as it were struck dumb. Sahadeva stands looking at him, wondering what he would say. In the meanwhile the conversation between Draupadī and her maid is over and they purposely station themselves in a corner to observe the doings of Bhīmasena. It will thus be seen that the whole situation has been managed with great skill.

Further on when the account of the fresh insult suffered by Draupadī is related and Bhīmasena in impatience rises from his seat and makes a solemn declaration of killing Duryodhana in a very short time, the reader begins to wonder what next will follow and whether Bhīmasena will really set Yudhisthira's authority at naught, as looks quite probable. But just in time the drum is loudly beaten behind the curtain and the Chamberlain enters to announce to Bhīmasena the failure of Kṛṣṇa's mission of peace. This saves Bhīmasena from a rather awkward situation that has been created by his own solemn declaration of killing

Duryodhana in a very short time. For he can now proceed to do what he wants with full permission of his elder brother. Then again the scene where the Chamberlain reports the incident of Duryodhana's unsuccessful attempt to secure the person of Kṛṣṇa, which is marked by the reverential confusion in which Bhīmasena, Draupadī and Sahadeva are thrown at the mere mention of Kṛṣṇa's name, and the scene which depicts the parting between Bhīmasena and his loving Queen, amply illustrate Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's dramatic powers.

The hopeless confusion that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa makes in the elaboration of what he terms the *vyutpatti* or significance of Yudhiṣṭhira's demand for five villages has been set forth in detail in our Notes pp 42-44. In the *Mahābhārata* Yudhiṣṭhira is a pious man, who is really apprehensive of the impending destruction of his family and makes honest efforts to bring about peace and avoid war by preferring a very modest request for five villages. But Bhatta Nārāyaṇa tries to make Yudhiṣṭhira a politician in addition. Thus not satisfied with merely entertaining pious hopes and taking action accordingly, the Yudhiṣṭhira of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa wants to make a display⁽¹⁰⁾ of his pious heart before the world and tries to convince it that the moral guilt of the war with all its attendant evils lies on Duryodhana and not on him. This is evidently the politician's point of view and it is this which Bhatta Nārāyaṇa wants to make out in that elaborate *vyutpatti* which Sahadeva so painfully explains to Bhīmasena. In the *Mahābhā-*

(10) Read Sahadeva's words 'एव कृते लोके तावत् स्वगोविक्षयाज्ञाद्विहृद्यमाविष्कृतं भवति.' Here emphasis is to be laid on the word *आविष्कृतम्* (manifested, revealed) Yudhiṣṭhira is not satisfied by merely possessing a heart, apprehensive of the destruction of his family. He wants to manifest it to the world.

rats there is no significance whatsoever in Yudhisthira's demand for five villages. With a view to represent him as a politician in addition to being a pious man, Bhatta Nārāyana endows his message to Duryodhana with a certain significance, which Bhīmasena, not a politician by any means, naturally fails to understand. The politician's and the soldier's points of view, represented respectively by Sahadeva and Bhīmasena, have been very ably set forth in their conversation regarding this significance, and it is amusing to see how the soldier Bhīmasena by his plain words at once demolishes the elaborate structure of vyutpatti constructed by the politician Sahadeva. It will thus be seen that inspite of the confusion created, which Bhatta Nārāyana probably was quite unconscious of, the change he has introduced and the way in which he carries it out, reveal his ingenuity and skill and make the whole scene very effective from the dramatic point of view.

The main interest of this Act centres round the all-dominating figure of Bhīmasena, the conflict of emotions in whose mind it is very interesting to observe. Caught between two opposing duties, duty to his elder brother, who as a guru is to him always vandyā^(x), and duty to his beloved, whose wrongs he cannot allow to remain unavenged any longer, Bhīmasena presents a spectacle of absorbing interest. For thirteen long years, out of reverence for his elder brother, he has slept over the various humiliations received, with eager but subdued expectations of ultimately being able to have his full revenge. But this new move on Yudhisthira's part, of arranging peace through the intercession of Kṛṣṇa for the paltry consideration of five villages, seems to shatter for ever his cherished dreams of bloody revenge. He can clearly see that peace with the

(x) Compare Bhīmasena's words 'वन्द्यं वदुमुप' p. 17 (Text)

accursed Kauravas at this juncture means the abjuration of all his solemn vows and the non-fulfilment of his sacred promise to Draupadi to bind her hair with hands gory with Duryodhana's blood. The thought of all this is so repugnant to him that in rage he becomes ready to revolt against Yudhishthira's authority and seek his revenge single-handed. The report of a fresh insult suffered by Draupadi seems to complete his severance from his brothers and in impatience he rises up as though to rush immediately at Duryodhana's throat. But fortunately the announcement of the failure of Kṛṣṇa's mission of peace comes in time to save him from the awkward situation of having to go against the desires of his elder brother, whom he has followed all these long years with absolute devotion.

This picture of Bhīmasena's mental state is no doubt extremely interesting, but what is still more interesting to observe is the sting of conscience which inspite of himself he feels in adopting the course he intends to follow. He is conscious that he will incur sin and censure, but in rage declares he is prepared to suffer them. When calmed down a little he begins to speak in somewhat apologetic tones and seems to suggest that his violent words proceeded from the torment caused to him by Yudhishthira's attempt to arrange peace. He inquires sympathetically regarding the condition on which peace is sought to be effected and it looks as though he will consent to peace, if it is made for adequate consideration. But the degrading nature of Yudhishthira's demand, coupled with the report of a fresh insult suffered by Draupadi, inflame him once more and his impatience knows no bounds. The remarks of Draupadi here and there are also significant in this connection^(y).

(y) Compare 'हजे बुद्धिमतिके, भवत्येतयदि महाराज प्रतिकूलो न भवेत्' pp 11-12, 'नाथ न लज्जन्त एते । त्वमपि तावन्मा विस्मर्षी ।' p 15 and 'किं नाथ दुष्कर त्वया परिकुपितेन । सर्वथानुग्रहन्त्येतद्वधवासितेन भ्रातर ? p. 19.

They clearly show that the princess is quite confident of Bhīmasena's capacity to achieve everything he has promised, but appears to be equally certain that he will not go against Yudhishthira's desire even inspite of his violent words and apparent readiness to do so. Her constant prayer therefore is that Bhīmasena's brothers and especially Yudhishthira may not prove antagonistic to his determination. It will thus be seen that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa has done extremely well in presenting to us this absorbing picture of Bhīmasena, which reveals his dramatic genius no less than his skill.

Out of the other characters presented to us in this Act Draupadī is the most important. A princess of blood royal by birth, endowed with the most matchless beauty, she is subjected to humiliations of the worst type inspite of her valiant husbands. Her miseries seem to have even changed her princely disposition and a strain of cynicism and hopelessness is clearly noticeable in her short pithy sentences. Her affectionate heart and her feverish anxiety for the safety of her husbands are very well brought out in that small scene of leave taking at the end of the Act. Here Bhatta Nārāyaṇa clearly displays his intimate knowledge of a woman's and a wife's heart. Though always wishing, and wishing with a fervour that miseries and humiliations of the kind she has suffered can alone generate, that her husbands should declare war and avenge her wrongs, she grows extremely nervous about their safety, when war is actually declared, and fears that they may endanger their lives out of regard for her. With a beating heart she therefore implores them not to do so. Altogether this much-wronged daughter of epic India, with hair loose and her face stamped with dejection, excites our pity and we heave a sigh of relief, when towards the end of the Act we learn that her days of misery are over and that happiness, which she richly deserves, is in store for her.

Sahadeva and Buddhimatikā deserve some notice. But of these Sahadeva is a mere non-entity. His only qualification is that he is most loved by Bhīmasena and that is why Bhatta Nārāyaṇa brings him on the stage. He has no individuality and no marked characteristics. He represents the view of Yudhisthira and serves as an excellent foil to Bhīmasena. But even he is so much impressed by Bhīmasena's words that on the spot he promises support to his undertaking on behalf of himself and his brothers, when yet he does not know the result of Kṛṣṇa's mission of peace. Buddhimatikā on the other hand is far more interesting. Smart, clever and ready-witted, she is just the kind of servants that were attached to royal households in ancient India. Inspired with dignified loyalty towards her mistress, she makes quite a spirited reply to Bhānumati's mean attack and deservedly wins the applause of Bhīmasena. When on firm ground, she hesitates not in snubbing even the angry Bhīmasena⁽²⁾, for she knows very well that this snub will ultimately gratify him.

6 SUMMARY OF PRELUDE TO ACT ii

Vinayandhara, the Chamberlain of Duryodhana, is searching for Queen Bhānumati. He is an old man, infirm with age, and lives in the harem more as a matter of form than for any active service. Yet he has been commanded by His Majesty to find out quickly whether the Queen has returned from her customary duty of bowing to the feet of Gāndhārī. For, before Duryodhana proceeds to the field of battle to congratulate Karna, Jayadratha and others on

(2) Read —

भीमसेनः—बुद्धिमतिके, ततो देव्या किमभिहितम् ।

चेटी—प्रभार, यदि परिजनहीना मवेत्तदा देवी मणति ।

भीमसेनः—किं पुनरभिहित मय्या ।

—वेणीसंहारः p. 18

See for the snub p. 51 (Notes)

their slaughter of Abhimanyu, he wants to see his Queen. On inquiry with a palace maid, Viṅgikā by name, Vinayandhara learns that Bhānumatī has returned from Gāndhārī's abode and is staying in the Bālodyāna, because she has from that day begun the practice of a religious observance with a view to ensure victory in battle to her husband.

The Chamberlain is struck at the contrast between the mentalities of the wife and the husband, for while the former realises the seriousness of the situation arising from the war that is proceeding, the latter is yet engrossed in sensual pleasures, when the Vāsudeva-helped Pāndavas are up in arms against him. Another point in the behaviour of his master also strikes Vinayandhara as being improper viz. that he should feel no anxiety at the overthrow of the celebrated warrior Bhīṣma, who has been laid low by the Pāndavas, but that he should be elated at the murder of the boy Abhimanyu, already much too exhausted by his victory over many mature fighters'. The Chamberlain sees no hope for his master except that of Providence, and proceeds to inform Duryodhana that Bhānumatī is in the Bālodyāna.

7 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF PRELUDE TO ACT II

In a drama there are always certain subordinate parts of the plot, which are important enough for the audience to know, but which at the same time are not so important as to be regularly enacted on the stage. Then again there are certain incidents, the knowledge of which is necessary for the audience in order to pick up the thread of the narrative, but which are impossible to be actually represented on the stage, either on account of the inherent difficulty involved in such representation, or on account of the prohibition of their representation laid down in works on dramaturgy.

It is just these subordinate parts and these incidents that form the proper province of a Viskambhaka or Prelude, and a Praveśaka or Interlude. Used at the beginning of an act, the purpose of a Prelude or an Interlude is thus to connect the preceding with the subsequent Act by informing the audience of what has happened in the interval, either by direct statement, or, better, by indirect suggestions. This is done by means of a monologue, or of a conversation between two or more characters. The very nature of a Prelude or an Interlude precludes the possibility of characters of the first class taking part therein and they are therefore run by middle or low characters. Their purpose necessarily gives them an air of artificiality, for therein we get more narration than action, and the cleverer the dramatic artist is, the more natural and easy his Viskambhakas and Praveśakas turn out. Besides this Viskambhaka Bhatta Nārāyana has used a Praveśaka at the beginning of the next Act and in both these he shows himself to be a very successful artist.

This Viskambhaka, though so short, is so full of suggestions, which moreover are conveyed to the audience in a perfectly natural way. War, we learn, has already commenced and Bhīṣma, the first Commander-in-Chief of Duryodhana has been over-thrown. Abhimanyu, Arjuna's valiant son, has just been slain and the Kaurava king is in exultation. But the chief importance of this Viskambhaka lies in the glimpses it affords us into the character of Duryodhana, who is to figure prominently in the main scene to follow. By means of a few artistic touches Bhatta Nārāyana has here skilfully painted the character of Duryodhana, who has been shown to be at once thoughtless, mean, voluptuous and degraded. When the Chamberlain makes a reference to Duryodhana's wonderful power, he is really somewhat sarcastic in his remark and wants to bring out the thoughtlessness of his master in issuing to an old

decrepit servant a command which makes him run about in spite of himself. That he should rejoice at the slaughter of Abhimanyu and proceed to congratulate the great warriors who conjointly killed the boy, who was fighting single-handed and was exhausted, is a sufficient testimony to his meanness and moral degradation. His profound unconcernedness at the overthrow of the greatest warrior on his side shows how little he has realised the responsibilities of his position and his attraction for the pleasures of his wife's company, in the face of the Pāndavas who were up in arms against him, reveals at once his voluptuousness and his recklessness.

It is worthy of note that all these traits of Duryodhana's character have been brought to our notice so naturally that we hardly think the author is making any conscious efforts to delineate his character. For he takes advantage of the natural tendency of servants, especially old ones, to criticise the doings of their masters behind their back and nothing therefore strikes us as unnatural when the Chamberlain gives us a piece of his mind regarding his master Duryodhana. This picture of Duryodhana serves also a dramatic purpose *viz* it prepares us for witnessing him as he is painted in the second Act proper.

Another important character to which our attention is drawn in this Prelude is Bhānumatī. The wife of a great, proud, reckless and voluptuous monarch, who is passionately fond of her, Bhānumatī still remains a dutiful daughter-in-law and observes the usual custom of paying her respects to her mother-in-law every morning, though, as we shall presently see, her mind is extremely uneasy. She has already grown apprehensive regarding her husband's safety and in her own way attempts to ensure him victory of arms in the field by commencing religious observances. She presents an interesting contrast to her

reckless husband, who cannot realise the seriousness of the situation, a contrast which is carefully maintained throughout the second Act.

8 SUMMARY OF ACT ii

Queen Bhānumatī has dreamt an ominous dream, which has greatly alarmed her loving heart. Consequently she leaves her bed-chamber early in the morning, even without taking formal leave of her husband, as was her wont, and after paying her customary respects to her mother-in-law, retires to a lonely place in the Bālodyāna in company with her friend Suvadanā and her maid Taralikā and with the discovery of these three women in the Bālodyāna, the second Act proper commences.

Pressed by her friend and her maid to relate to them the account of her dream, Bhānumatī, with the nervousness so natural to her loving nature, tells them that in her dream she saw a nakula or an ichneumon killing a hundred serpents in her presence and that the same nakula afterwards proudly removed her breast garment. This is surely ominous as it indicates the slaughter of the hundred Kauravas and the inflicting of widowhood on Bhānumatī at the hands of Bhīmasena. Suvadanā and Taralikā become naturally alarmed even like Bhānumatī and they all determine to avert the evil effects of the dream by pious deeds such as salutation to gods and gifts to Brāhmanas. The sun has by this time risen high and Bhānumatī offers him worship with great devotion and begs of him that her evil dream may through his favour turn out to be auspicious to her husband and his brothers. As she further proceeds to perform the worship of other deities as well, her pious activity is rudely disturbed by her husband Duryodhana, who recklessly scatters on the ground the flowers meant for being offered to the gods.

between Duryodhana and his wife, which is already suggested in the Viskambhaka to this Act is here consistently maintained up to the end. The low despicable character of the Kuru king is thoroughly exposed. Right up from the beginning of this Act the poet has availed himself of every opportunity to lower Duryodhana in our estimation. The reckless way in which he stops the pious observance of his wife fully reveals his sensuality. His deliberate blindness to evil omens that unmistakably suggest his fall and his absolute refusal to form even a proper estimate of the strength of the Pândavas clearly indicate the infatuation of a doomed man which has completely overpowered him.

But the care with which the poet paints the character of Duryodhana, interesting in its own way no doubt, is as nothing when compared with the attention he bestows on Bhānumati. Bhṛta Nārāyaṇa has lavished all his skill on her. She is in fact his favourite. An ideal wife, she has the misfortune of being wedded to a man who is unworthy of her. She represents virtue married to vice. The nervousness of her heart at the alarming dream she has dreamt is well brought out in the hesitating way in which she relates the account of her vision. Her devotion to her lord and her anxiety for his safety are visible at every step. A typical Hindu wife, she tries her best to persuade her husband to allow her to proceed in her pious observance; but she fails in her attempt and has to submit to the inevitable. Up to the very last she acts as the guardian angel of Duryodhana, but he heeds not her voice.

The poet has thus made Bhānumati an exceedingly lovable woman. We now begin to wonder how such a perfect creature can have been guilty of the base, almost unwomanly, attack that she is represented as making on Draupadi in the first Act. We almost wish she had not ridiculed Draupadi in that way. That appears to be the only blot on her other-

applied to an ichneumon? Do we ever make a distinction between a good-looking ichneumon and an ugly one? Ideas like these are possible in the case of noble animals like horses, elephants and others. We may for instance speak of a horse as possessed of excellent or even celestial beauty. But to speak of an ichneumon as surpassing celestial beauty sounds a trifle absurd. Then again how can an ichneumon remove the garment from Bhānumatī's bosom by extending his hand? Bhānumatī is not even represented as sitting. She entered a bower of creepers. The ichneumon followed her and removed her breast-garment by stretching out his hand. How then could this happen?

In this connection it appears to us that in making Bhānumatī relate the account of her dream Bhatta Nārāyaṇa was so much taken by the suggested sense of her words, the sense which he intended Duryodhana to understand, that he actually neglected to see that the words of Bhānumatī, in the sense in which she intended them, were reasonable. This must therefore be put down as a serious defect in the episode of the dream which otherwise is very ingenious. There is however a way of 'defending' Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. Visions seen in dreams must not be judged by standards applicable to incidents of ordinary life. For in dreams all kinds of occurrences, possible and impossible, are observed. Svapaṇ janah kim na khalu preksate? Bādarāyaṇa also speaks of the wonderful appearances presented in dreams. (Vide Brahmasūtra iii. 2. 3 and Rāmānuja's Śrībhāṣya thereon) Therefore the dream of Bhānumatī, though apparently unreasonable, must not be considered to be really so. It must be added however that such defence appears to us to be extremely weak.

The second Act is delightful no doubt. But how far does it advance the central action of the drama? What is the purpose of this Act as part of the play Venīsamhāra?

If these questions are pressed home, Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa has no answer. In fact, as we enjoy the various episodes in this Act, the account of Bhānumatī's dream, Duryodhana's suspicions about her virtue, the love scene between the husband and the wife, we altogether forget that we are reading a drama called Venīsamhāra. Only towards the close of the Act, when Dussalā and her mother-in-law enter with the news of Arjuna's vow, we become aware of events happening outside the Bāloḍyāna. Thus as far as the central action of the drama is concerned, the only advance made by this Act is the knowledge of Arjuna's vow that is conveyed to the audience.

This then represents the fundamental defect in Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's dramatic genius. Though master of the art of portraying brilliant character sketches, the poet lacked the skill of weaving his Acts indissolubly with the central action. This Act, for instance, appears to have been constructed more for the purpose of depicting Sṛṅgāra and presenting the characters of Duryodhana and Bhānumatī than for advancing the action of the play. Even with reference to this love scene and the manner in which it is described, a critic may raise an objection on the ground of the advanced age of the parties concerned. For we must remember that Duryodhana was fairly old by this time.

10 SUMMARY OF INTERLUDE TO ACT III

On the field of battle a demoness in hideous dress is glutting over the war which affords her ample opportunities of feasting upon human flesh and blood. She is gratified to think that the war has enabled her to replenish her larder with hundreds of pitchers of human blood, flesh and marrow. In this scene of delight she is reminded of her husband Rudhīrapriya and wonders where he could have gone. She then calls out to him.

Rudhirapriya now makes his appearance. He is fatigued and is feeling thirsty. Vasāgandhā is struck to find her husband suffering from thirst when there is a regular sea of blood and fat on the battle-field on account of the innumerable men, elephants and horses that are slain. Rudhirapriya informs her that he has been to see their mistress Queen Hidimbā, who is burning with grief for the death of her son Ghatotkaca. Only somehow she is being consoled by Queen Subhadra, herself in similar sorrow owing to the slaughter of Abhimanyu, and by Draupadī. Vasāgandhā then proceeds to inform her husband of the great store that she has been able to collect and recounts the names of some of the famous warriors whose blood and fat have contributed to that store.

Rudhirapriya on his part informs his wife of a welcome command he has received from Queen Hidimbā. Master Bhīmasena has vowed to drink the blood of Duśśāsana. Rudhirapriya must therefore wander on the battle-field in the wake of Bhīmasena and drink Duśśāsana's blood by entering Bhīmasena's body at the proper time. Vasāgandhā is only too glad to learn of this command.

A great tumult is at this time heard. The demon observes that Drona is being dragged by the hair and killed with a sword by Dhrstadyumna. Aśvatthāman is then sighted and the demon couple quickly quits the stage lest he may kill them too in anger against the son of Drupada.

11 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF INTERLUDE TO ACT III

From the dramatic point of view this Interlude is most successful. In a perfectly natural way it suggests so many things that have happened in the interval between the close

of the second Act and the beginning of the third. Arjuna has fulfilled his vow of killing Jayadratha and he did excellent battle work on that day. Ghatotkaca, Drupada and Virāta (Lord of the Matsyas) on the Pāṇḍava side and Bhagadatta, Bhūriśravas, Somadatta and Bālīka on the Kaurava side have been killed. We also know Drona has just been slain by Dhṛṣṭadyumna and the entrance of Asvatthāman is cleverly suggested. It will thus be seen that this Interlude advances the action of the play in a very great measure.

But one may ask: What was the necessity of representing this loathsome scene between the demon and the demoness and the disgusting Bibhatsarasa with which it is replete? Would it not have been possible for the poet to suggest all these incidents in some other way, say, by means of a conversation between two servants or two soldiers? Is it not an evidence of bad taste on the part of the author to present us with a scene of this kind after the delightful love-scene of Act ii?

It appears to us there are three purposes, two moral and the third dramatic, which Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa wants to achieve by means of this Pravesaka. As a delineator of human society he wants us to realise that the world is not after all merely 'delightful'. It possesses a much more varied character than we seem to imagine. Engrossed in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures we are too often apt to forget this. Writers on philosophical subjects sometimes try to dissuade us from worldly pleasures by depicting the human body in all sorts of loathsome ways. By representing how our most cherished bodies are after our death eagerly feasted upon by demons and goblins, the poet seems to create in us dislike for mere animal pleasures. Bhāṛṭhari tried to depict the true nature of worldly existence by telling us in one

stanza what happens in different places in human society (a) By depicting this loathsome scene just after the delightful scene between Duryodhana and Bhānumatī, Bhatta Nārāyaṇa probably wants to convey to us the same lesson

It will be noticed that underlying the Bibhatsarasa which is so prominent in this Pravesaka, there is a current of the sentiment of love. It is not difficult to detect in the speeches and actions of the demoness her intense love for her husband. By making the hideous demon couple the ālambana-vibhāva (b) or substratum of love, the poet accomplishes the second moral purpose of this Interlude viz. to demonstrate the essential unity of love. Educated and cultured people living in cities, surrounded by all the conveniences and comforts that modern civilization can provide, sometimes seem to think that fine dresses and dainty food, motor cars and ball rooms and things of this kind generally, are necessary for the development and enjoyment of love. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa perhaps wants to tell us by means of this Pravesaka that love can be developed and enjoyed as much in the filthy surroundings of the ghastly war as in the romantic environments of the Bālodyana.

(a) Bhartrihari's stanza runs as follows

कचिद्विनाशाय कचिदपि च तत् तेन रुदति
कचिद्विद्वद्वेष्टी कचिदपि गुरामन्तलद ।
कचिदामा गम्या कचिदपि गल्गलुट्टयपुत्रो
न जानं ममार किममृतमय किं विषमय ॥

—वैराग्यशतक

(b) A sentiment, according to Sanskrit poetics, is developed on account of Vibhāva, Anubhāva etc., as declared in 'विभावानुभावेन ध्यक्त मञ्चारिणा तथा । रसतामेति रत्यादि तस्मात्' साहित्यदर्पण III 1. विभावs are of two kinds, आलम्बनविभावs and उद्दीपनविभावs आलम्बनविभावs are women etc who excite love उद्दीपनविभावs are चन्द्रोदय, वसन्त etc. which heighten !

The delight which the prince derives from the company of his accomplished queen is exactly the same as the peasant receives from association with his rustic wife

A philosophically-inclined mind will perhaps see in this Pravesaka, with its under-current of love, quite a different moral purpose. If love can be found in such disgusting surroundings and among such hideous people, it certainly cannot be the magnificent and sacred emotion that poetry depicts it to be. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa is probably ridiculing that sentiment in this Pravesaka and asking us to flee away from it and seek solace somewhere else. Such will be the lesson that a philosopher may draw from this Interlude.

But the dramatic purpose of this Pravesaka is far more important than the moral ones and it is this which testifies to Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's genius. Bhīmasena had vowed to drink the blood from Duṣṣāsana's chest. As a Kṣatriya he must literally carry out his vow. But how was an Āryan to drink the blood of his enemy? A demon could drink human blood, not a prince of a renowned royal family. Such a fiendish act would ill become the hero of a drama. It was true in the Mahābhārata Bhīmasena performed this ghastly deed. But surely a dramatist could lessen the loathsome character of the act by giving it a different turn. This is what Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa has done by introducing this scene between the demon and the demoness. Queen Hidimbā has so ordered that Rudhīrapriya is to enter Bhīmasena's body and drink Duṣṣāsana's blood, so that it is not a Kṣatriya, but a demon that will drink human blood. Of course Bhīmasena is not aware of this arrangement. When he performs the deed, he boasts of having himself drunk the blood of Duṣṣāsana (vide iv 1 below). But we know that it is not Bhīmasena, but somebody else, who has drunk human blood. It will thus be seen that from the point of view of dramatic effect the importance of this

Drone also has a task that absolves the hero of the drama, in the eyes of the reader and the spectator, from the sin of having spilled the blood of a human being. In order therefore to be able to do this, the poet brings in a conversation between the old man and the demagogue. No other kind of scene would have served his purpose.

17. SUMMARY OF ACT III

Asvatthāman, the eldest son of Duryodhana's second Caste, Drona, is struck at the great upset that is proceeding in the battlefield. Thinking that his father has perished in a battle which is coming, he proceeds to the battlefield to see the display of his father's valour. An evil omen strikes him in a little and he is surprised to see a great warrior like Karna running away. Just then Asvatthāman's chariot of Drona arrives to inform the young warrior of his father's tragic end. Asvatthāman father-father that a false news of his own death was conveyed to his father, who, thereupon, being overcome with grief laid down his weapon and was in such defenceless position despatched by Duryodhana. The enhances between the grief and wrath of Asvatthāman, who in the meanwhile is joined by his maternal uncle Kṛpa. Kṛpa succeeds in turning up to a certain extent the grief of his nephew. Asvatthāman becomes impatient to avenge the murder of his father and orders his chariot to be made ready. Kṛpa now suggests to the young man that he should seek succession to the position of the C-in-C and tells him that Duryodhana is probably ready to install him in that position. Both thereupon proceed to see the king.

Duryodhana and Karna now make their appearance. The former wonders why Drona, on hearing the death of his son, laid down his arms, instead of vigorously proceeding with the work of avenging it. Karna cunningly informs

him that Drona really wanted to crown his son Emperor of the whole earth after the great war had destroyed all the Kṣatriyas and therefore thought it was no use wielding arms when his son had been killed and thus abandoned his weapon. At this stage Kṛpa and Asvatthāman approach them. Kṛpa then suggests to Duryodhana the advisability of installing Asvatthāman Commander of his armies, but the latter tells him that that position has already been promised to Karna. In the conversation that follows Karna makes some malicious remark against Asvatthāman with the result that an altercation between the two takes place and they become ready to strike at each other. Duryodhana and Kṛpa pacify them. Seeing that he cannot humble the pride of Karna, who has slandered his father, Asvatthāman vows that he will forego his weapon till Karna is killed.

At this time a fearful announcement is made from behind the curtain. Bhīmasena has caught Duśśāsana in his clutches and challenges all the Kaurava warriors to protect him if they can. Duryodhana and Karna quickly leave the stage in order to render help to Duśśāsana. Asvatthāman observes that Arjuna has engaged both Duryodhana and Karna and Bhīmasena is about to fulfil his dreadful vow. The scene is too much for him and he becomes ready to grasp his weapon. But an aerial voice prevents him from proving false to his vow. The gods seem to be on the side of the Pāṇdavas. Asvatthāman is helpless. He however sends Kṛpa to back Duryodhana up and then himself leaves for the camp.

13 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF ACT III

The third Act consists of five scenes. The first commences with the entrance of Asvatthāman and ends with Sūta's speech after stanza 12 on p. 67. The second is a short one and is made up of Kṛpa's soliloquy on pp. 67-

68 The third begins with Krpa's speech after stanza 14 on p 68 and also ends with his speech on p. 76, when both he and Ásvatthāman start for the place where Duryodhana is staying. The fourth scene consists of the dialogue between Duryodhana and Karna and extends from stanza 27 on p. 76 to stanza 28 on p 78. The fifth and the last scene begins with Krpa's speech after stanza 28 on p 78 and extends to the end of the Act.

The scenes that go to form the various Acts of the Venīsamhāra are so managed by Bhatta Nārāyana as to present no difficulty for their representation on the stage. Thus here we see that while Krpa goes through his soliloquy that forms the second scene, Ásvatthāman is in a swoon and the charioteer is engaged in restoring him to consciousness. The two characters, who are already on the stage before Krpa's entrance, are in this manner kept busy during Krpa's soliloquy. This is a clever device and reminds us of a similar one used by the poet in Act i for keeping Bhīmasena and Sahadeva engaged while Draupadi and Buddhimatikā hold a dialogue found on pp 11 and 12.

But in this Act there is a difficulty of stage-management further on. What are Krpa and Ásvatthāman to do during the conversation between Duryodhana and Karna, that forms the fourth scene of this Act? The stage direction intended for them says merely 'parīkrāmatah'. Are they simply to move to one side of the stage and stand there listlessly till the dialogue between the king and his friend is over? This would be a very awkward situation for these two characters to be in and would indicate faulty stage-management. Though Bhatta Nārāyana does not actually say so, it appears to us that he wants these two characters to quit the stage ostensibly with a view to go to Duryodhana's camp, but really in order to avoid the unenviable situation of having to stand blankly on the stage. No

attitude towards the Brāhmana warrior, gives us a rude shock. Karna in the Mahābhārata is certainly not so mean. It is true he does not possess any very great admiration and veneration for Drona. But he is a thorough sportsman all the same. During the days that Drona held supreme command, Karna fought under him ungrudgingly. Not only this but when Duryodhana accused Drona of partiality towards Arjuna in allowing him to break through his lines which he had to do in order to kill Jayadratha, Karna defended Drona by remarking that the latter did his best, but that the death of Jayadratha was due to fate.^(d) On the other hand Asvatthāman in the Mahābhārata is not so noble, as he is depicted in this drama. Why then should Bhatta Nārāyana exalt the one and lower the other? The reason appears to be that as a Brāhmana the poet naturally felt well disposed towards the Brāhmana warrior and wanted to make him out as a paragon of virtue, in whom love for his father,

- (d) For this incident read chapter 152, Dronaparvan, from which the following stanzas may be quoted

अत्रर्क्षे तदा कर्ण पुत्रो द्रुपद्विस्तव ।
 तस्य दृष्टसहयेन पाण्डवेन किरीटिना ॥ २ ॥
 प्राचार्यानिहितं व्यूहं मित्वा देवो मुहुर्मिदम् ।
 तं व्याचच्छ्रमानस्य द्रोणस्य च महात्मनः ॥ ३ ॥
 निहतो योयमुच्यमानो सैन्ययो विनिपातितः ।
 निश्चितं कथं धीर द्रोणस्य युधि पाण्डव ।
 मेन्यात् मुहुर्मिदं व्यूहं यतमानस्य शुष्मिणः ॥ ४ ॥
 उपितं फाल्गुनो नित्यनाचार्यस्य महात्मनः ।
 ततोऽस्य दत्तवान् द्वारमुद्धेनैव शत्रुहन् ॥ ५ ॥
 अमयं मित्युराजाय दत्त्वा द्रोण परतप ।
 प्राशत किरीटिने द्वारं पश्य निर्गुणता मयि ॥ ६ ॥
 आचार्य मा विगर्हस्व अक्षय्यासौ मुहुश्चेते द्विज ।
 यथावत् यथोरसाहं त्यक्त्वा जीवितमात्मनः ॥ ७ ॥
 यथेनं समातिश्रम्य प्रविष्टं श्वेतवाहन ।
 नात्र सुहृदोऽपि दोषः स्यादाचार्यस्य कथञ्चन ॥ ८ ॥
 मेन्ययो निहतो मुद्धे दैवमत्र परं स्मृतम् । .. ९ ॥

कर्ण उवाच ।

bravery, high sense of duty, nobility and magnanimity were all combined. The Ksatriya warrior Karna did not deserve much sympathy. It did not matter if he was painted mean, malicious and despicable. It would thus appear that some kind of caste-predilection was responsible for such pictures of Asvatthāman and Karna.

It is sometimes supposed that the quarrel between Asvatthāman and Karna arose out of the question of succession to the command of the armies after the death of Drona. But this supposition is incorrect. Careful perusal of the relevant passages from this Act will show that the quarrel has nothing to do with the question of succession to the supreme command of the armies. When the first shock of grief for the death of his father is over and Asvatthāman becomes ready to go to the battle-field to have his revenge, Krpa suggests to him that he should first get himself installed Commander of the armies. In a spirit of true sportsmanship, Asvatthāman remarks that this is not of much consequence. But Krpa tells him that Duryodhana is probably eager to give him that post and is perhaps waiting for his arrival to install him therein. If this is the case, Asvatthāman will like to go and offer to accept the command himself instead of waiting to be formally requested by Duryodhana to do so. But in all this it is clear that Asvatthāman nowhere shows himself eager to have the post. When again in the interview with the king, Asvatthāman learns that Duryodhana has already promised the post to Karna, he does not utter a single word of dissatisfaction or protest, but once more declares his intention of doing his best to kill the king's enemies. It will thus be seen that the quarrel has nothing to do with succession to the command of the armies.

The quarrel between Asvatthāman and Karna arises in the following manner. It was Krpa who actually suggests

to Duryodhana that Ásvatthāman should be installed in the position which his father held. Duryodhana thereupon informs him that that office has already been promised to Karna. Krpa then remarks that it is not proper to supersede Ásvatthāman in favour of Karna, especially when Ásvatthāman is at this time immersed in grief. At this stage Ásvatthāman intervenes and puts a stop to this conversation between the king and Krpa regarding succession to the command of the armies by declaring in bombastic language that he will kill the enemies of Duryodhana that very day and finish all talk of war. Karna thereupon reminds him that such things are easier said than done. Besides there are other warriors also in the Kaurava army, who are capable of achieving what Ásvatthāman boasts he will do. Ásvatthāman appreciates the truth of Karna's remarks and in almost apologetic terms explains that his words arose from the vehemence of his grief and that he had no intention to belittle the prowess of any warrior on the Kaurava side. Here the matter should really have ended. But Karna makes a wicked and malicious remark to the effect that he who is immersed in grief should shed tears and that he who is enraged should descend on the field of battle, weapon in hand, but should not indulge in such ravings (c). It is this remark of Karna that inflames Ásvatthāman and the quarrel commences. It will thus be seen that it is Karna who is responsible for the quarrel and the moral guilt of its consequences lies wholly on his head.

(c) Read —

अश्वत्थामा—अङ्ग राज, एवमिदम् । बहवः कौरवचलेऽत्र शक्ताः । किं तु इदं खोपहतः
शोकविगबशाद् ब्रवीमि, न पुनर्वीरिजनाधिक्षेपणम् ।

कर्ण — शूद्र, इदं खितस्याश्रुपातं कुपितस्याश्रुद्वितीयस्य संश्रानावतरणमुचितं नैवे-
दिष्यामि प्रलापात् ।

In the Mahābhārata succession to the supreme command of the armies after the death of Drona was a very smooth affair. When Drona was killed, Kaurava forces began to run away. Duryodhana stopped them and carried on the fight till the evening. Then he held a council of war, wherein Asvatthāman himself proposed that Karna¹ should be installed as the Commander of the armies.² Duryodhana consequently offered the position to Karna, who accepted it with alacrity.

The remark we made at the end of Act ii is equally applicable to Act iii also. Though presenting brilliant character sketches and arresting situations the Act does not in any way mark the progress of the main action of the plot. Even as in the case of the second Act, so here as well the only progress made is towards the end. That progress is represented by the fearful announcement of Bhīmasena that Dussāsana has fallen within his clutches and his challenge to all Kaurava warriors to protect him if they can. As observed before Bhava Nārāyaṇa lacked the art of dramatic construction. Perhaps the nature of the plot he selects rather than an inherent defect in his genius is responsible for so many brilliant but detached scenes, loosely strung together, that really constitute his drama.

14 SUMMARY OF ACT IV

Towards the close of the last Act we have seen how on learning that Dussāsana has fallen within the clutches of

(f) Vide chapter 10, Karnaparvan, from which read —

आषाढसुधो मेधावी यादवहो यादवनाम्ने । १२

ते वयं प्रवर दृष्ट्वा सर्वगुणैर्निर्बुधम् ॥ १५ ॥

कर्जमेवामिनेन्दुमानं सेनापतिं मारुत ।

दर्शं सेनापतिं कृत्वा गन्धिपद्मनिहे विभूम् ॥ १६

एव ह्यतिनन्द इव कृत्वास्वी सुदुर्बुधम् ।

येनन्यत्र इवास्य हन्तेऽन्तु रणे विभूम् ॥ १७ ॥

Bhīmasena, Karna and Duryodhana run to his help. Arjuna engages them both, while his elder brother accomplishes his dreadful vow. In the fight Duryodhana receives a number of wounds, which bring on a swoon. His charioteer therefore thinks it wise to hasten away his master's chariot from the field of battle and the fourth Act opens with the entrance of this charioteer, who is conveying away his master, lying unconscious in the chariot.

The charioteer takes the chariot under the shade of a certain Nyagrodha tree near a lake, where he hopes his master will regain his consciousness, being fanned by the cool fragrant breeze. Duryodhana as yet does not know that Bhīmasena has already butchered his brother. On recovering he becomes eager to run to his brother's help. But when the truth is related to him, he is overcome by grief, and even despondency, under the influence of which he wishes he were dead.

At this time Sundaraka, a soldier belonging to Karna's army, enters. He has been sent by Karna with a message to Duryodhana. After some efforts he succeeds in finding the whereabouts of his Majesty and gives to him a detailed report of the fight which ensued after the slaughter of Duśśāsana and in which Karna's son Vrsasena lost his life. This is a fresh grief to Duryodhana, which, added to the melancholy message of Karna, increases his despondency. He, however, determines to kill his enemies before committing suicide and wants therefore to go to the field of battle. At this time the arrival of his parents, Dhṛtarāstra and Gāndhārī is announced and though unwilling to see them in this condition, he decides to go and pay them his respects.

he utters the last stanza of this Act, we forget his evil doings and become a sharer of his griefs.

As already observed Bhatta Nārāyana was adept in the art of presenting character-sketches. The fidelity and love of Duryodhana's charioteer are well brought out. The chivalry of Arjuna is clearly suggested. The intense love of Duryodhana for his brother and his deep friendship for Karna are successfully depicted. These in fact formed the only relieving features of Duryodhana's otherwise low character.

The Act also presents to us some very beautiful examples of Bhatta Nārāyana's prose. The opening speech of Sundaraka and his descriptions of Arjuna's fight and Karna's mental condition may well take a very high rank as specimens of Sanskrit prose literature.

16 SUMMARY OF ACT v

This Act opens, as already suggested towards the close of the last Act, with the entrance of Dhrtarāstra and Gāndhārī in a chariot driven by Sañjaya. They go to the field of battle ostensibly with a desire to offer consolation to Duryodhana, but really with the object of inducing him to desist from fight and sue for peace with Yudhishthira. Duryodhana easily refutes the arguments they adduce for making peace and prepares to go to the battle-field to fight with Bhīmasena. At this time a great uproar is heard behind the curtain and the news of Karna's death is brought. This throws all of them in grief and Duryodhana now determines to kill Arjuna first in revenge for the slaughter of his friend. Another uproar behind the curtain introduces Bhīmasena and Arjuna on the stage. They are in search of Duryodhana with a view to pay him a friendly visit, but on learning that Duryodhana is sitting with his parents, Arjuna thinks of returning. Bhīmasena insists on paying

their respects to the elders as a matter of duty. High words pass between Bhīmasena on the one hand and Dhṛtarāstra and Duryodhana on the other. A fight between Bhīmasena and Duryodhana looks likely, but Arjuna somehow prevents it. At this time a voice from behind the curtain announces the command of Yudhisthira to Bhīmasena and Arjuna to withdraw their forces and stop the fight, as evening has arrived. The two Pāṇḍava brothers consequently leave the stage.

Once more from behind the curtain Āśvatthāman's challenge to Arjuna is heard, for Karna being now killed, Āśvatthāman is free to take up his weapon. Dhṛtarāstra is glad at his arrival and asks Duryodhana to receive him with due courtesy. But the proud monarch is in no mood to extend courtesy towards a man, who wished and waited for Karna's death. Consequently he receives the Brāhmaṇa warrior with indifference and even makes a cutting reference to his vow of fighting on Karna's death. Dissatisfied with the reception he has met, Āśvatthāman departs. Dhṛtarāstra fears that Duryodhana's coldness towards a warrior of Āśvatthāman's calibre at this time forebodes the end of the Bharata family. Yet he gathers up courage and sends word to Āśvatthāman not to mind Duryodhana's words, but to do his best to destroy the enemies on the score of his friendship with Duryodhana from their very childhood. Dhṛtarāstra and Gāndhārī then go to Śalya's camp and also ask Duryodhana to accompany them.

17 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF ACT V

After the Viśkambhaka-like fourth Act, with its long descriptive speeches, this one affords welcome relief. It is full of movement from start to finish. There are here no less than six entrances, six exits and five speeches from behind the curtain. This Act can be divided into three

distinct scenes. The first comprises of the conversation between Duryodhana, his parents and Sañjaya and is exceedingly touching. The efforts of the old doting parents to dissuade Duryodhana from continuing the hopeless struggle have a peculiar pathetic interest. We pity the old couple, but we cannot sympathise with them. For, behind their parental affection is a kind of cowardice quite unworthy of epic Ksatriyas. The pathos of the scene is heightened by the news of Karna's death which comes on the party like the bolt from the blue. This scene serves to bring out one more trait of Duryodhana's character viz. his excessively proud nature. Though disaster after disaster befalls him, his pride does not bend. His ready repudiation of the base proposal of Dhrtarāstra to devise some secret means of destroying the Pāndavas demands our admiration. But the death of Karna, his greatest and most trusted friend, on whom all his hopes of conquering the enemies are centred, is a blow too heavy for even his proverbially proud spirit. Upto this time he has entertained hopes of victory, with Karna to support him. But now hope seems to forsake him. Conversation with Bhīmasena and Aśvatthāman is marked with the courage and defiance which desperation breeds. Altogether even in his fall Duryodhana shows himself to be great.

The second scene of this Act is that in which Bhīmasena and Arjuna take part. It is really difficult to understand what purpose Bhatta Nārāyana had in arranging this scene. Its only important feature is the wordy duel between Bhīmasena and Duryodhana. But we already have enough of such duel in the third Act. Then again no reason is assigned as to why Bhīmasena and Arjuna were seeking Duryodhana. Bhīmasena himself tells us they had no evil intention in trying to see him. What was their object then in going to that out-of-the-way spot of the battle-field in

search of Duryodhana? It is not possible to answer this question satisfactorily. The only possible answer is that not being able to see him on the field since the slaughter of Dussāsana, they thought that Duryodhana was trying to avoid battle and wanted therefore to find him out and try to gather his intentions and inform him themselves, by way of triumph, of Karna's death.

Regarding this scene itself it appears to us that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa grows a little uneasy over the fact that for the last three Acts his hero Bhīmasena has not made his appearance on the stage. The audience also becomes eager to see him especially after his killing Dussāsana. Then again Arjuna was the principal hero of the Mahābhārata war. A play based on that epic, which does not bring him somewhere would be disappointing to the audience. So he must be made to come on the stage somehow. It is these considerations which appear to us to have weighed with the poet in arranging this scene.

The third and the last scene of this Act is the one in which Asvatthāman figures. Now that Karna is dead, he is free to take up his weapon and enters on the stage with his usual rhodomontade of killing the Pāṇḍavas in no time. He even slightly refers to Karna's failure to act up to his word and boastfully professes to achieve everything that the king desired. Duryodhana, however, will have nothing of the man, who desired the death of his friend and curtly sends him away. But Dhṛtarāṣṭra implores him to do his best, not minding Duryodhana's offensive words.

Now what is the dramatic purpose of this scene? In the following Act there is no reference to Asvatthāman's having done anything in accordance with Dhṛtarāṣṭra's entreaty or his own boastful words. What propriety is there then of bringing him on the stage in such martial enthusiasm, which is increased the more by his self-imposed

rest? Are we to suppose that he has grown so unsportsmanlike as to neglect his duty by his side because Duryodhana does not receive him with honour? It would be difficult to make this supposition in view of the excellent spirit that Aśvatthāman displayed in the third Act. Under these circumstances the only justification for this scene would seem to lie in the author's desire further to illustrate Duryodhana's friendship for Karna by representing that he rejected the proffered services of even the great Aśvatthāman, because the latter desired for his friend's death and reviled him even after he had died and in his very presence.

It will thus be seen that though we have much movement in this Act, the scenes composing it are not dramatically relevant. This corroborates the impression already recorded viz. that Bhatta Nārāyana lacked constructive dramatic skill.

18 SUMMARY OF ACT vi

Bhīmasena has made a new vow that he would kill Duryodhana before the next day dawned and that he would *commit suicide, if he failed to do so*. On learning this Duryodhana disappears and his disappearance causes great anxiety to Yudhishthira and Draupadī, whose entrance along with a male and a female attendant marks the commencement of Act'vi. Yudhishthira sends his attendant to Sahadeva with instructions to search all the possible places where Duryodhana may be found. As the attendant is departing on his mission, he meets Pāñcālaka, with whom he re-enters the stage. Pāñcālaka now gives the Pāndava king and his queen a detailed account of how Duryodhana was traced to a lake and how Bhīmasena by violently agitating its water, forced him to come out. Pāñcālaka proceeds to tell them that a battle between the two is proceeding and that he has been sent to Yudhishthira by the divine Lord Kṛṣṇa to say that

he may now safely look upon the world-as void of all enemies and may start preparations for his coronation. Yudhishthira forthwith issues a command to his Kañcukin to begin festivities in expectation of his younger brother's victory

A demon by name Cārvāka, a friend of Duryodhana, now enters in the guise of a sage. He pretends to have come from the battle-field and to be much fatigued and thirsty. In the course of his conversation with Yudhishthira he informs him that while the fight between Bhīmasena and Duryodhana was proceeding, Balarāma arrived on the scene and, impelled by affection for his favourite pupil Duryodhana, he made him a secret sign, by taking advantage of which the Kaurava was able to kill the Pāndava. Arjuna then took up the mace from his dead brother's hand and is at present fighting with Duryodhana. The demon further reports how Balarāma, expecting the death of Arjuna, who was not skilful in a mace-fight, put on his chariot, with great efforts, his younger brother Kṛṣṇa, who was ever so partial to Arjuna, and departed for Dvārakā

This news of the death of Bhīmasena causes great sorrow to the Pāndava king and queen. Yudhishthira's grief knows no bounds. Draupadī becomes almost insane and presents a sight truly pathetic. Out of grief they both determine to commit suicide by burning themselves in fire, before hearing the unpleasant news of Arjuna's death. They are encouraged in this by the disguised demon, whose only object in thus misleading Yudhishthira and his queen is to make them commit suicide before Bhīmasena comes to them victorious. An uproar is heard from behind the curtain and Draupadī, fearing that the news of Arjuna's death may reach them any time, hastens Yudhishthira with a view to put into practice their resolve. Yudhishthira sends a loving message to Sahadeva, imploring him not to follow him in

death and also leaves a like message to Arjuna in case he be successful. After offering obsequial water to his father Pāṇḍu and to his recently killed brother Bhīmasena, Yudhisthira becomes ready to die along with Draupadī. At this time the confused Kañcukin brings the news that Duryodhana, with his body smeared with blood and with his terrible mace upraised, is coming and is seeking after the Pāñcālā princess. This of course means the death of Arjuna which magnifies the grief of Yudhisthira and Draupadī who are consequently overtaken by a swoon.

From behind the curtain comes now an announcement of Bhīmasena. Therein he asks people not to be scared away by his sight, but to inform him where Draupadī is. For he has killed Duryodhana and wants to fulfil his vow of tying Draupadī's hair with hands gory with the blood of the last of the Kauravas. As his body is smeared with blood all over, he cannot be easily distinguished with the result that he is taken to be Duryodhana covered with the blood of Bhīmasena and Arjuna. It is this mistake, which, as we have already seen, leads the Kañcukin to bring the news of Duryodhana's arrival in search of Pāñcālī.

Thus when Bhīmasena arrives on the stage, he finds that Yudhisthira is ready to fight with him, under the mistaken idea that he is Duryodhana, and that he actually catches him in his arms with violence. The mistake is quickly found out and Draupadī's hair are duly tied by Bhīmasena with hands stained with Duryodhana's blood, as he had once more promised her in Act i, 21. Even the Siddhas from the sky express their delight at the tying of Draupadī's mass of hair, which has been the cause of so much havoc in the world. Kṛṣṇā and Arjuna now enter and the Lord offers his congratulations to Yudhisthira. He further tells him that he has arrived in such haste because he came to know that Yudhisthira had been deluded by the demon

Cārvāka, who has, however, been subsequently captured by Sahadeva. There now remains nothing to complete the happiness of Yudhisthira and the drama closes with a blessing from the divine lips of Lord Kṛṣṇa in response to the request of Yudhisthira.

19 CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF ACT vi

The sixth Act consists of four distinct scenes. The first contains a description of the various means which Yudhisthira orders Sahadeva to adopt in order to find out the whereabouts of Duryodhana, and Pāṇcālaka's account of how Duryodhana was traced to a lake and how Bhīmasena forced him to come out. The second scene commences with the entrance of the demon Cārvāka, who, by conveying to Yudhisthira and Draupadī the false news of Bhīmasena's death and Arjuna's mace-fight with Duryodhana, throws them in grief and encourages them to commit suicide by entering fire. The third consists of Yudhisthira's parting message to Sahadeva and Arjuna, and his preparation for death by offering a final libation of water to his ancestors and also to Bhīmasena. The fourth is marked by the entrance of the victorious Bhīmasena, the removal of Yudhisthira's delusion and the tying up of Draupadī's dishevelled hair, the Venīsamhāra, which forms the main theme of the drama.

The entrance of Yudhisthira and Draupadī at the beginning of this Act is abrupt. No indication of this is given in the previous Act. This is one more instance of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's lack of constructive skill. Then again instead of giving us a Viśkambhaka, the poet makes the first stanza and the next long speech of Yudhisthira serve its purpose. A clever dramatist would have arranged a beautiful Viśkambhaka in which the death of Śalya, the terrible vow of Bhīmasena and the disappearance of Duryo-

dhana could have been skilfully conveyed to the audience and would have concluded it with a cunning reference to the anxiety of Yudhisthira and Draupadī. This would have prepared us to see them enter on the stage and no abruptness would have been felt. Surely, this new vow of Bhīmasena was of sufficient importance to justify a Viskambhaka being assigned to it. Yudhisthira's passing reference to it does not bring home to the reader its dreadful importance.

Another point to be noted is that we are nowhere told the full nature of Bhīmasena's vow. It is apparently based upon Arjuna's vow to kill Jayadratha. But the fact that Bhīmasena had vowed to kill himself in case he failed to kill Duryodhana that very day is nowhere explicitly revealed to us. We have only to gather it from the fourth line of the first stanza. Merely to say that the vow was aparyusita is not sufficient. We have further to note that this vow of Bhīmasena is an invention of the poet. There is no saction for it in the Mahābhārata. Bhatta Nārāyana's object in introducing it is to bring out the adventurous nature of Bhīmasena and to produce a startling dramatic effect. It spreads a gloom over the entire Pandava camp in the very hour of victory and it is quite natural for Yudhisthira and Draupadī to be alarmed. It must however be remarked that a cleverer artist would have made a better use of this vow.

Out of these four scenes that constitute this Act the first is the weakest. Even like the fourth Act, this scene is of the nature of a Viskambhaka. Its purpose is to convey to the audience certain information and this information, as in the case of Act iv, is conveyed in the most inartistic manner. But the poet apparently had another purpose also in arranging this scene. He wanted to bring out the nobility of character of both Bhīmasena and Duryodhana.

Impelled by noble chivalry, which disdains to strike at a fallen dejected enemy, Bhīmasena offered Duryodhana the choice of fighting with any one of the Pāṇḍavas. It was an exceedingly critical moment. The fortune of the Pāṇḍavas was at stake. But Duryodhana also showed himself to be truly great and noble. The two heroes thus appear at their best in this scene. It must be noted here that the reasons, which Yudhisthira explains to Draupadi as having urged Bhīmasena in making that perilous offer, can hardly have been in the mind of Bhīmasena at that time. They are the reasons of a cool calculating politician, such as Bhīmasena surely was not. Half the value of Bhīmasena's noble chivalry would be lost if it were supposed to have proceeded from such sordid considerations.

The account of the meeting between Bhīmasena and Duryodhana practically follows the Mahābhārata. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa however makes one material change. In the Mahābhārata it is not Bhīmasena, but Yudhisthira, who addresses taunting words to Duryodhana and thus forces him to come out. It is again Yudhisthira who makes the proposal referred to in stanza 10. As Bhatta Nārāyaṇa wanted Yudhisthira to be engaged somewhere else, he made this change. The poet has also introduced a change in the account of Duryodhana's discovery. According to the Mahābhārata, Kṛpa, Kṛtavarmaṇ and Asvatthāmaṇ, while holding a conversation with Duryodhana, who was in the lake, were overheard by some hunters, who carried the news to Bhīmasena, who in turn imparted it to Yudhisthira. They then all went to that place in company with Kṛṣṇa.

Bhatta Nārāyaṇa is at pains to describe this scene in some detail, because he wants to show both these great warriors at their best in the hour of their last combat. When Bhīmasena observed that dejection had overcome Duryodhana as he cast his glance on the battle-field, where

not a single friend of his was in sight, his nature at once underwent a change. His usual sarcasm forsook him and in a spirit of noble chivalry he offered him the choice of fighting with any one of Pāṇdavas. The fate of these brothers trembled in the balance as Duryodhana cast his angry glance at Bhīmasena and Arjuna. Not to speak of Yudhishthira and the two sons of Mādrī, if Duryodhana had elected to fight a mace-fight with Arjuna, well, the Pāṇdavas would have been nowhere. If Bhīmasena showed himself to be noble and chivalrous, Duryodhana was still more so. A great warrior disdains to fight with an unequal. The noble lion would refuse to harm a jackal. So Duryodhana chose Bhīmasena for his adversary. The Pāṇdavas had staked all their fortune on Duryodhana's honour as a warrior and Duryodhana amply justified their confidence. This last touch in the character-sketch of the fallen monarch makes even his fall noble and dignified.

The three other scenes are full of action and their main interest lies in the delineation of the character of Yudhishthira. In fact Yudhishthira forms the central figure of the sixth Act, as Duryodhana is of the fourth. But the difference is that in the fourth, Duryodhana is not a new personality to us. But here we make acquaintance with Yudhishthira for the first time. He has been referred to a few times before and that is all we know of him. There are some very fine traits in Yudhishthira's character, which a casual reader is very likely to miss, under the influence of the incredible credulity which Yudhishthira displays in his conversation with Cārvāka. First, then, at the very commencement of the Act, this pious monarch is shown to us as bent down under a heavy load of anxiety caused by the dreadful vow of Bhīmasena. Reading between the lines we can also detect the stings of his conscience, which tells him that he himself is at the bottom of the whole trouble.

The most important trait of his character is of course his unequalled affection for his brothers. His vow of committing suicide in the absence of even one of his brothers, though by the way not quite worthy of a Ksatriya, eloquently proclaims his fraternal affection. Though intensely loving all his younger brothers, Yudhisthira seems to love Bhīmasena most. His condition on learning the false news of Bhīmasena's death becomes truly pathetic. He is so overpowered by the calamity that he consciously neglects his Ksatriya's duty of fighting to the last with the killer of his brother and prepares to throw himself in the fire along with Draupadī. But it is to his credit that at the critical moment he gathers up courage and rises to the full height of a Ksatriya and fearlessly advances to fight with him whom he considers to be the killer of Bhīmasena and Arjuna. This clearly shows that he was no coward and that his earlier unwillingness to meet Duryodhana had proceeded purely from a feeling of hopelessness, created by the false news of Bhīmasena's death, which had been conveyed to him.

But the credulity, with which Yudhisthira so implicitly believes the words of Cārvāka and which at first impresses us as being such a prominent trait of his character, seems almost ridiculous and lowers in no small measure his character in our eyes. Perhaps he was led away by the outward appearance of Cārvāka. A pious man himself, he could not but rely on the words of one who appeared to be an ascetic. Besides affection deprived him of the power of discrimination, so much so that he actually forgot the hopeful message of Kṛṣṇa and the fact that the Lord would not encourage him falsely. Thus this credulity, though manifestly a weakness of character, proceeds from the noble sentiment of fraternal affection, carried to excess and when we realise this, our condemnation of Yudhisthira in this

respect loses much of its sting. The truth would appear to be that Bhatta Nārāyana was helpless in the matter. A consummate delineator of pathos, he had set his heart in this Act to depict the pathetic condition of Yudhisthira and Draupadī as it would be on the death of Bhīmasena. For this purpose he somehow wanted them to believe that Bhīmasena was dead, and, as such belief was ordinarily impossible, it was inevitable that they should appear credulous when they did actually entertain such belief. It would thus be seen that the poet had to depict Yudhisthira to be weak in this respect in order to be able to depict the kind of pathos that formed his main topic in this Act?

And the poet's success in the delineation of this pathos is great. There are few figures in Sanskrit dramatic literature so pathetic as Yudhisthira in this Act. Though we do not like the un-Ksatriya-like way of his lamentation, we fully appreciate the brotherly affection that unsettles his mind and dries up what Duryodhana has termed the ksatradharmakārkaśyam in him. While Duryodhana also loves his brothers with equal intensity, his lamentations are always mixed up with a stern determination to have his revenge on the murderer of his brothers. But Yudhisthira seeks no revenge. He perhaps thinks that revenge will not give him back his brother. The difference between the two monarchs, though they love their younger brothers with equal ardour, is that while Duryodhana is a true Ksatriya with a predominance of rajas in him, Yudhisthira is almost a Brāhmana in whom sattva predominates. In the armour of a Ksatriya he finds himself ill at ease. Overpowered by sorrow, he loses his peculiar Ksatriya lustre and resorts to the softness of a Brāhmana. What Duryodhana said happened in the case of Drona, happened exactly in the case of Yudhisthira.

Equally pathetic is the picture of Draupadī. At the terrible news of the death of Bhīmasena, whom she loves so

tenderly and on whom she has pinned all her faith of having her wrongs avenged, she loses the balance of her mind and turns almost insane. The shock is too great for her soft affectionate heart. She cannot withstand it. Though she says only a few things, her words are harrowing. She reminds one of Shakespeare's Ophelia. Both find themselves unable to bear terrible shocks and lose their heads. Then again Bhatta Nārāyana well brings out the nervous confusion in which Buddhimatikā and Jayandhara are thrown, when they see their master and mistress on the point of committing suicide. The maid actually throws herself before Yudhisthira and Draupadī in order to prevent them from entering fire and the old chamberlain is moved to tears inspite of his grey hair.

It will perhaps be realised by many that the situation, as it is developed by the poet in this Act, is admirably suited for a tragedy. The poet could very easily have made Yudhisthira and Draupadī consign themselves to fire before Bhīmasena arrived on the scene. Then Bhīmasena and others would also kill themselves. In fact this would appear to be the natural development of his situation. But then, Bhatta Nārāyana could not do so. First, because such a change in the account of the Mahābhārata would have proved too sweeping for any Hindu audience to digest. Secondly, rules of Sanskrit dramaturgy forbade the tragic ending of a drama.

III THE SOURCE OF THE VENĪSAMHĀRA AND THE CHANGES INTRODUCED THEREIN BY THE POET

The Mahābhārata has proved a fruitful source of inspiration to Sanskrit poets,^(g) the writers of narrative poems or kāvyas as well as the writers of dramas^(h) The best known drama in Sanskrit, the Abhijñānaśākuntala of Kālidāsa, is based on an episode occurring in the Mahābhārata. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's Venīsamhāra on the other hand is not based on any episode, but deals with the main story of the great epic In a drama of six Acts the poet has, as it were, abridged the story of the Mahābhārata right up from the Udyogaparvan to the Śāntiparvan Kṛṣṇa's mission of peace to the Kauravas, which marks the commencement of the drama, is described in the Udyogaparvan, while the

- (g) As a source of inspiration to poets the following description of the Mahābhārata occurs in the Ādiparvan of that epic itself —

सर्वेषां परिमुखाणामुपजीव्यो भाविष्यति ।
 पर्जन्य इव धृतानामक्षयो भारतद्रुम ॥ १ ९३
 अनाश्रित्येदनाल्लोका यथा मुनि न विद्यते ॥
 आहारमनपाश्रित्य शरीरस्येव धारणम् ॥ २ ३८८
 इदं कवियरे सर्वसाध्यानुमुपजीव्यते ।
 उद्वेगेष्वभिर्भूयैरभिजात इयेश्वर ॥ २० ३८९

- (h) Out of the five Mahākāvyas the following four are based on the Mahābhārata Kumārasambhava, Kirātārjunīya, Śiśupālavadha and Naiṣadhīyacarita —As regards dramas six of the thirteen dramas of Bhāsa derive their material from the Mahābhārata The Abhijñānaśākuntala of Kālidāsa and the Bālabbhārata of Rājasekhara are based on the Mahābhārata

coronation of Yudhisthira, which is referred to at its close, takes place in the Sāntiparvan.

The story of the Mahābhārata is one of the most well-known stories among the Hindus. The selection of such a story for the plot of a drama entails its own disadvantages for the dramatist. He cannot introduce sweeping changes in the original which is so well-known. He cannot depict the various characters in any other light than the one with which people are most familiar. Otherwise his drama would cease to be realistic and he would be condemned in society and would hardly attain anything like popularity. Under these circumstances, the task of a poet who makes such selection becomes very difficult. He has to proceed with absolute caution. But in spite of these difficulties he introduces changes, which not only are not unpalatable to the people but actually succeed in changing their ideas about the original story, he indeed must be regarded as a very skilful dramatist. Something of this kind has occurred in the case of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa, as will be clear from the following paragraphs, where we put down, Act by Act, the important changes that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa has introduced in his original.

Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's most important change, a change on which the action of the whole drama is in fact based, is indicated by the very title of the drama. Draupadī was dragged in the gambling hall by Dussāsana, who had caught hold of her by her hair, which consequently became dishevelled. Duryodhana further insulted her by baring his thigh in her presence. Bhīmasena vowed that he would kill Dussāsana and drink the blood from his chest. He further vowed that he would kill Duryodhana and, with his hands gory with the Kaurava monarch's blood, would tie up the dishevelled hair of Draupadī. Draupadī was therefore to allow her hair to remain in that loose disordered

condition till Bhīmasena fulfilled his vow. Now the title Venīsamhāra refers to this tying up of Draupadi's dishevelled hair by Bhīmasena after killing Duryodhana and this particular part of Bhīmasena's vow is Bhatta Nārāyana's own invention, as we have already seen before. Thus this tying up of the hair, which is the most important event in the drama and which gives the play its name, is the poet's innovation.

The importance of this innovation can hardly be exaggerated. With his drama Bhatta Nārāyana has succeeded in moulding the thoughts of the people so much that the ordinary reader has no idea that there is anything new in this vow of Bhīmasena. Bhatta Nārāyana's glory lies just in this that what really represents the change which his genius has introduced is generally accepted as the version of the original itself.

The first Act as a whole follows the account of the Mahābhārata in its representation of the failure of Kṛṣṇa's mission of peace and the consequent commencement of hostilities. The entire setting of the drama is of course Bhatta Nārāyana's and it must be remembered that when we speak of the changes introduced we only refer to the changes in the main story. Yet even in this first Act there are two minor changes introduced for dramatic purpose. It is here represented that Kṛṣṇa was sent to make peace on the condition of a grant of five villages. In the Mahābhārata this specific offer had previously been made through Sañjaya and had been rejected by Duryodhana. After this Kṛṣṇa was sent to make a second and final attempt at amicable settlement. He had no instructions regarding any specific terms on which to conclude peace. Bhatta Nārāyana makes this change for a double reason. He did not want to refer to Sañjaya's mediation, because that was not much important. But he wanted to bring out the peaceful intentions of

the poet's own creation. Consequently the meeting between Draupadī and Bhānumatī, referred to in the first Act, is also an invention of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa.

Stanza 25⁽¹⁾ of the second Act refers to the indignities that were offered to Draupadī in the gambling hall. At the command of Duryodhana Duśśāsana dragged her into the hall by her hair and garment and addressed to her the insulting words 'A cow, a cow'! This is what we gather from this stanza. But the Mahābhārata does not confirm this account. As a matter of fact there is some discrepancy in the epic itself regarding this incident. Thus, according to the Sabhāparvan, when after the anudyūta the Pāṇḍavas started for the forest, dressed in barks, Duśśāsana ridiculed them in unstinted language and addressed the words 'Gauh, gauh' to Bhīmasena and not to Draupadī⁽²⁾. Later on in the Karnaparvan, when Bhīmasena kills Duśśāsana and drinks his blood, he twice refers to the words 'Gauh, gauh', as having been uttered by Duśśāsana. The second reference suggests that other people also had joined him in uttering

(1) This stanza is as follows —

एतावृष्टिलोचोदयमाना दृष्ट्वा शाननेनाज्ञया
पाथाली मम राजचक्रपुम्नो रीर्गीरिति प्यारता ।
तामिथैव स वि नृ माण्डिपथरो नाभीत् पुष्यानन्दनो
यत् क्षत्रियराजस्य कृतिनः प्रोधास्वद वि न तत् ॥

(2) Read —

एव वृषाणमजिनिर्धियागित
दृष्ट्वा शाननेन (भीमसेन) परितृप्यति स्म ।
मध्ये पुष्पाणि धर्मविषद्वमार्ग
रीर्गीरिति समादयन् युयुतलज्ज ॥ १९ अध्याय १९

these words. ^(k) But both these references are general and they do not specify whom exactly these words were addressed and on what occasion. On the other hand from the words which Bhīmasena addresses to Duryodhana in the Salyaparvan, after the latter had been laid low on the battlefield, we gather that it was Duryodhana himself who uttered these words with reference to Draupadī, when she was dragged in the assembly dressed in her only garment, and that even other people had taken up this cry. ^(l) Thus the original account of the incident not being uniform, Bhatta Nārāyaṇa did well in representing it in the way he has done in stanza 25. For Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's representation is dramatically more effective.

The Pravesaka to the third Act is also the work of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. Its dramatic importance lies in this that it absolves Bhīmasena from the sin of drinking human

(1) Read —

उवाच तद् गौरिति यद् मुवाणो
हटो वदे कर्णनुदोषनाम्नाम् । २०
भीम इपि हत्वा तत्रेव इ शासनमनर्पणम् ।
पुनरित्वाञ्जलिं धृते रुधिरस्योद्यनि स्वन ॥ २१
शृण्वन्तां लोकवीराणामिदं वचनमब्रवीन् ।
एव ते रुधिरं वण्टात् पिबामि पुरुषाधम ॥ २२
मूर्खीदानीं तु सरष्ट पुनर्गौरिति गौरिति ।
ते तदास्मान् प्रनृत्यन्ति पुनर्गौरिति गौरिति ॥ २३
तान् एव प्रतिनृतयाम पुनर्गौरिति गौरिति ॥ २४

—अध्याय ८३

(2) Read —

ततो दुर्दोषेन हत्वा भीमनेन प्रनापयान् ।
पातिर्न कीरवेन्द्र तमुपगन्धेऽमवसीत् ॥ ३
गौरगौरिति पुरा मन्द ओदन्निस्त्रासमम् ।
यत् समादा हनयन्मार्गान्ना यद्मि दुर्नेने ॥ ४
तस्याधरामस्य फलमयं त्वं समयाद्बहि ।
एवमुक्त्वा च वामिनं पदा मौलिमुशान्मृशन् ॥ ५
देहमात् पुगेनामृत्यन्तं मृदा गौरिति गौरिति ।
तान् एव प्रतिनृतयाम पुनर्गौरिति गौरिति ॥ ६

—अध्याय ८२

blood^(m) The main body of the third Act is concerned with the character sketches of Asvatthāman and Karna and their quarrel. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's change as regards the delineation of their character lies in exalting the character of Asvatthāman and lowering that of Karna. As regards the actual quarrel the poet has evidently drawn upon Drona-parvan Adhvāyas 158 and 159. From these we learn that when Karna boasted of his strength and of his determination to kill the Pāṇḍavas, Kṛpa ridiculed him by pointing out the various occasions such as the battle at the capital of Virāṭa, on which Karna had an opportunity of meeting the Pāṇḍavas, but was able to do nothing. Karna in wrath declared he would cut the tongue of Kṛpa if he dared say those things again. At this Asvatthāman rushed at Karna with a drawn sword and a scuffle between the two seemed imminent. Duryodhana and Kṛpa pacified them.⁽ⁿ⁾ This

(m) Vide above our Critical Appreciation of this Interlude pp 51-55

(n) In this connection read the following:—

कर्ण उवाच । परित्रातुमिह त्रातो यदि पार्थ पुत्रदर ।
 तनराशु पराजित्य ततो हन्तासि पाण्डवान् ॥ ५
 स्य ह्येषाण कर्ण तु त्वं शारद्वतोऽब्रवीत् ।
 मन्यन्मिव महाबाहू वृत्तपुर्णमिदं वच ॥ १२
 वदुःश कथ्यमे कर्ण पौरवस्य समीपत ।
 न तु ते विक्रम कश्चिद् दृश्यते कन्दमेघ वा ॥ १४
 समागम पाण्डुमुर्तदृष्टे कदुःशो युधि ।
 सुपथ विजितश्चासि पाण्डवं वृत्तनन्दन ॥ १५
 एवमुक्तरतु रथिय प्रदमन् भरतर्यम ॥ १८
 अब्रवीच्च तदा कर्णो गुरु शारद्वत कृपम् ।
 त्वं तु विप्रश्च वृद्धश्च अज्ञपतश्चापि सयुगे ।
 वृत्तस्नेहश्च पार्थव मोहान्मानसमन्यसे ॥ २६
 यथेष्ट पश्यमे मूलो ममात्रियमिह द्विज ।
 ततस्ते खड्गमुद्यम्य जिह्वा छेत्स्यामि दुर्मते ॥ २७

—अध्याय १५८

[Continued on the next page]

incident occurred before the death of Drona. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa introduces several changes in this to suit his purpose. First, the quarrel is depicted as taking place after Drona's slaughter. Kṛpa has nothing to do with it. It proceeds from Karna's malicious remark. But in the Mahābhārata it is Aśvatthāman who takes the offensive. These changes are of course intended to exalt the Brāhmaṇa warrior and to lower Karna.

The fourth Act is mainly narrative and generally follows the original in its account of the slaughter of Duśśāsana and the death of Vṛṣasena. The description of the fight is couched in terms which remind one of such descriptions in the great epic.

[Continued from the preceding page]

तथा परुषित दृष्ट्वा स्रनपुत्रेण मातुलम् ।

खड्गमुद्यम्य धेगेन द्रोणिरस्यपतद् द्रुतम् ॥ १

अथत्यामोवाच । यदुर्जुनगुणांस्तथ्यान् कीर्तयान् नराधम ।

सूत द्वेषात् सुदुर्बुद्धे त्व भर्त्सयासि मातुलम् ॥ ३

ऊ ते वीर्यं क चास्त्राणि यं त्वा निजित्य सगुणे ।

गण्डविधन्वा हतयान् प्रेक्षतस्ते जयदधम् ॥ ५

कर्णं पश्य सुदुर्बुद्धे तिष्ठदानीं नराधम ।

एष तेऽयं शिरः कायाद्द्वयामि सुदुर्मते ॥ ९

तमुद्यतं तु धेगेन राजा दुर्योधन स्वयम् ।

न्यवारयन्महतिजा कृपश्च द्विपदां वर ॥ १०

कर्ण उवाच । सूर्योऽयं समरश्लाघी दुर्मतिश्च द्विजाधम ।

आसादयतु मदीर्यं मुखेन शुक्रसत्तम ॥ ११

अथत्यामोवाच । तैरेतत्क्षम्यतेऽस्माभिः सनात्मज सुदुर्मते ।

दर्पमुत्सिक्तमेतत्ते फाल्गुनो नाशयिष्यति ॥ १२

दुर्योधन उवाच । अथत्यामन् प्रसीदस्व क्षन्तुमर्हसि मानद ॥

कोपः खलु न कर्तव्यः स्रनपुत्र कथयन् ॥ १३

त्वयि कर्णे कृपे द्रोणे मद्राजेऽथ सीमले ।

महत् कार्यं ममामक्तं प्रसीद द्विजसत्तम ॥ १४

The fifth Act is all the work of the poet. Though the characters that take part therein are familiar, the situation is the creation of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa.

The sixth Act deviates from the account of the Mahābhārata in some important respects. First, the new vow of Bhīmasena that he would kill Duryodhana on that very day, or would commit suicide in case he failed to do so, is Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's invention. He invents it in order to bring out more prominently Bhīmasena's adventurous nature. In this drama Duryodhana is represented as having run away and concealed himself in a lake in order to falsify Bhīmasena's vow and thus indirectly bring about the ruin of the Pāṇḍavas. In the Mahābhārata he repairs to a lake in order to escape from the clutches of the Pāṇḍavas, when he finds that all his people are killed and not a single soldier left alive to fight for him. In both, the element of fear is at the bottom of this disappearance. Though in the drama Duryodhana denies that he ran away through fear, we cannot believe him. This fear is incompatible with his proud nature and is a serious blot on his character. But the poet was tied down by his original. He has, however, tried to justify in some measure the conduct of Duryodhana by inventing the new vow of Bhīmasena. Duryodhana knew he had now no hope of victory against the Pāṇḍavas. But their ruin might be accomplished if Bhīmasena could in some way be made to fail in his vow. He would then commit suicide. Yudhishthira would also follow. Others might most probably do the same. Here was thus an opportunity, offered to Duryodhana by Bhīmasena's rash vow, of doing what he had no hope of accomplishing in open fight. Why should he not take advantage of this? This idea also was in the mind of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's Duryodhana when he entered the lake and it was quite natural.

That fear was not the sole cause of Duryodhana's resorting to the lake was shown by the very fact that he came up. If he had chosen to remain inside, Bhīmasena could not have brought him out. But his Kṣatriya pride was roused by the cutting words of Bhīmasena and, forgetting the above-mentioned reason of his disappearance, which after all represented the reason of a cold calculator, he rose up in the heat of the moment. It will thus be seen that though the poet has followed his original in representing this incident of Duryodhana's disappearance, he gives it a different turn by inventing the vow of Bhīmasena, with a view to lessen the ignominy of Duryodhana's conduct. This then constitutes the second purpose which the invention of the new vow of Bhīmasena serves.

The way in which, according to the drama, Duryodhana was traced to the lake and ultimately forced to come out also differs from the Mahābhārata. According to that account Kṛpa, Kṛtavarmaṇ and Asvatthāmaṇ were overheard by some hunters, while they were conversing with Duryodhana who was in the lake. The hunters carried the news to Bhīmasena, who reported it to Yudhiṣṭhira and then all of them including Kṛṣṇa went to the lake. Further, in the Mahābhārata it was Yudhiṣṭhira and not Bhīmasena as in the drama, that addressed all those bitter words to Duryodhana that ultimately forced him to come out. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa entrusted this business to Bhīmasena for a double purpose. First, he wanted Yudhiṣṭhira to be elsewhere engaged. Secondly, it was more appropriate that Bhīmasena, who was to give him battle, should talk in this vein to Duryodhana and force him to rise up. Then again in the Mahābhārata it is Yudhiṣṭhira who gives Duryodhana the option of fighting with any one of the Pāṇḍavas.

Bhatta Nārāyaṇa assigns this work to Bhīmasena for a similar double purpose.⁽ⁿⁿ⁾

Lastly, the scene with Cārvāka is Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's own invention. Cārvāka no doubt figured in the Mahābhārata, but there he played a different part. Yudhishthira made a triumphal entry into Hastināpura after the war was ended and with great pomp entered the assembly-hall of the palace. Brāhmanas gathered there to congratulate him and were being duly honoured by the victorious emperor. The demon Cārvāka had gone there, disguised as a Brāhmana. Declaring himself to be the spokesman of the assembled Brāhmanas, he denounced Yudhishthira as being the exterminator of his race. The Brāhmanas were surprised. They disowned him and, proclaiming him to be the demon-friend of Duryodhana, burnt him on the spot to ashes, with their humkāras. Such is the account of Cārvāka in the Mahābhārata.^(o) Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's object in the sixth Act was to depict the pathetic condition of Yudhishthira as it would be on the death of Bhīmasena. For that purpose he made use of the demon Cārvāka, the friend of Duryodhana, who, disguised as an ascetic conveyed to Yudhishthira the false news of Bhīmasena's death. In view of the ultimate purpose the poet had in view, it must be remarked that the use to which he put the character of Cārvāka supplied by the Mahābhārata was a highly ingenious one.

From the above survey it will be clear that though Bhatta Nārāyaṇa bases his drama on the Mahābhārata there are many things in the play which are his own and which proclaim his dramatic genius.

(nn) Read — 'ततश्च कृतीदोषाभिहितम्—आयि मोः पौरवराज, कृतं बन्धुनाश-
दर्शनमन्तुना । मेघ विनादं कृत्वा पर्याप्ता पाण्डवा समरायाहमसहाय इति ।

पश्चान्तं मन्यसेऽस्माकं ये सुयोधि सुयोधन ।

दैशितम्याचराग्रस्य तेन तेऽस्तु रणोत्सव ॥ १०

—Act vi, p 159

(o) Vide Śāntiparvan adhyāya 37

IV WHO IS THE HERO OF THE VENĪSAMHĀRA ?

There are three men in this drama, who can be said to be putting forward rival claims for being considered the hero viz Duryodhana, Yudhisthira and Bhimasena. In a play based on the story of the Mahābhārata, this was to a certain extent inevitable. For, all these three are first-class characters. The question was further rendered doubtful by Bhatta Nārāyana's unskilful handling of the plot, inasmuch as he did not give to one of these three such preponderating importance as to raise him automatically to the position of the hero. Thus it is that this rather unusual question as to who the hero of the piece is comes at all to be discussed. We shall therefore proceed to consider the relative value of the claims of each of these three.

If the hero of a drama means the man, who captures our attention most, whose personality is most interesting and on the delineation of whose character the poet has most expended his skill, then surely Duryodhana must be regarded the hero of the Venīsamhāra. From the time when we first make his acquaintance in the second Act up to almost the very end of the play he is never absent from our vision. In the second, fourth and fifth Acts he is of course the central figure. Though the interest of the third Act lies elsewhere, Duryodhana is present there for quite a considerable time and forms a very interesting figure from the point of view of his character. In the sixth Act he does not enter on the stage, certainly, but his actions are of dreadful importance to us and some of the finest traits of his character are brought out in this Act. Then again from the point of view of the delineation of character, Duryodhana is of absorb-

ing interest. No other character has received so much attention from the poet and been depicted in such varied aspects. Duryodhana thus possesses all the elements about him that should make him the hero of the play. But he has nothing to do with the main purpose of the drama viz the tying up of Draupadī's dishevelled hair. He therefore cannot be regarded the hero of the Venīsamhāra. It must at the same time be remarked that in delineating his character and in assigning to him the position of such commanding importance, the author shows himself to be lacking in sense of proportion, in so far as he has made him more interesting and captivating than the proper hero of the drama.

Yudhisthira is the next claimant. He is as a matter of fact regarded as the hero of the drama by commentators and rhetoricians. His claims are based on a double ground. First, he is the head of the party that ultimately succeeds and has thus the advantage of his natural position. Secondly, towards the close of the sixth Act, Bhatta Nārāyana has depicted him in such a way as to create reasonable grounds in our minds to suppose that he is meant to be the hero of the play. One of the formal functions of the hero of a drama is to pronounce the final blessing in the form of the *bharatavākya*. Dasyanta, Purūravas, Agnimitra, Rāma, Mādhava and others, all the undisputed heroes in their respective plays, do it. In the Venīsamhāra Yudhisthira utters the final benedictory stanza. So there is nothing unreasonable in regarding him the hero of this play. But as against these claims of Yudhisthira it has to be noted that he is the least interesting of these three figures. In fact during the course of the first five Acts nowhere does he attract our attention in any way. We even do not expect to see him play such important part in the sixth Act, as far as our expectations based on the earlier acts are concerned. Surely such a man could not

have been meant to be the hero of the drama. Secondly, even like Duryodhana, he is not directly connected with the tying of Draupadi's hair, the principal theme of the drama. As regards his uttering the *bharatavākya* it may be pointed out that he does so because of the precedence that belongs to him as the eldest of the Pāṇavas. His position as the head of the family secures him that advantage. But it cannot surely exalt him to the position of the hero of the play.

Lastly comes Bhīmasena. When the claims of Duryodhana and Yudhisthira are set aside, Bhīmasena easily attains the position of the hero. It is he who has vowed and who carries out the tying of Draupadi's disordered hair, a circumstance which gives the drama its title. The *Venīsamhāra* is thus directly connected with him. He is therefore the natural hero. Apart from this, the poet has tried, though not as much as we wish, to sustain our interest in his character and to keep him before our vision from the beginning to the end. This will be clear if we take a short survey of the six Acts in so far as they relate to him.

The interest of the first Act of course mainly centres round Bhīmasena. The second Act which is devoted to Duryodhana and Bhānumati and their love-affair is not altogether free from references to him. The incident of Bhānumati's dream clearly keeps us in mind of Bhīmasena and his vow of killing the hundred Kauravas. Further, the scene in which the Kañcukin hurriedly enters to announce the breaking of Duryodhana's flag-staff by the dreadful wind is so managed as powerfully to bring to our notice, once more, Bhīmasena and his vow of breaking Duryodhana's thighs. Stanza 28 of this Act also reminds us of Bhīmasena. The third Act no doubt diverts our mind not only from Bhīmasena but also from the *Venīsamhāra* itself, but even here towards the close Bhīmasena is mentioned as being on the point of accomplishing his vow of killing

Dussāsana and drinking his blood. The fourth Act records the actual accomplishment of this vow of Bhīmasena, which marks a step forward towards the devoutly-to-be-wished consummation of the tying of Draupadi's hair. In Sundaraka's description of the fight Bhīmasena also figures to a certain extent. Though the fifth Act is connected with Duryodhana and his affairs, Bhīmasena is specially brought on the stage probably with a view to satisfy the longing of the audience that has not *seen* him for a long time. The sixth Act marks the final triumph of Bhīmasena and there is no question of our interest in him flagging in any way there.

It will thus be seen that Bhīmasena and his vow have been consistently kept before our eyes, more or less, from the beginning to the close of the drama. Bhīmasena is thus the proper hero. Though this conclusion may be accepted, it must be pointed out all the same that the character of Bhīmasena has not been made so interesting as that of Duryodhana, nor have so many traits of his character been brought out as in the case of Duryodhana. Thus in comparison with Duryodhana he suffers in this respect. This, as observed before, must be put down to the author's lacking in sense of proportion.

V WHICH IS THE PREVAILING SENTIMENT IN THE VENĪSAMHĀRA ?

According to canons of Sanskrit dramaturgy a drama may contain more than one sentiment, but only one of them should be the principal or angin. The letter of the rule says that this principal sentiment should be either *śrngāra* (love) or *vīra* (heroic) ^(p) Commentators, adhering to the strict letter of this rule, try to prove that the prevailing sentiment in the *Venīsamhāra* is *vīra* or the heroic This, we think, is not right For we have to look in such cases to the spirit, rather than to the letter, of the rule concerned. And the spirit of the rule shows that one sentiment should be the principal and the others should be subordinate to it *Ānandavardhana* takes the same view ^(q) Otherwise in a drama like the *Uttararāmacarita*, where *karuṇa* sentiment predominates, we shall have to prove somehow that either *śrngāra* or *vīra* is the prevailing sentiment Similarly in the *Venīsamhāra* it will be found that *karuṇa* is the prevailing sentiment And this can be easily seen from the following considerations.

(p) Read *Sāhityadarpaṇa* vi —

नाटकं व्यातवृत्तं स्यात् पञ्चमन्विष्यमन्वितम् । ७

सुखं खलुद्वेदति नानारसनिरन्तरम् । ८

एक एव मवेदद्गी शृङ्गारो वीर एव वा ।

अहमन्ये रसा सर्वे कार्यो निर्वाह्येऽद्भुत ॥ १०

(q) Note *Draṇyāloka* iii 21

प्रसिद्धेऽपि प्रनदानो नानारसनिबन्धने ।

एवो रसोऽङ्गीकर्तव्यम्येवासुखमिच्छता ॥

In this drama there are four prominent sentiments developed viz. karuṇa or pathos, vīra or heroic sentiment, which in some places has an admixture of raudra or frightful, śṛṅgāra or love and bibhatsa or disgust. Of these the last is confined to the Pravesska of the third Act and śṛṅgāra to the second and hence they can hardly lay claim to be regarded as the principal sentiment of the drama. Between karuṇa and vīra, karuṇa, in the delineation of which Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa is a past master, definitely appears to be the principal. If we minutely survey the whole of the drama, we find that it is karuṇa which inheres in every Act and to which all other sentiments are made subordinate.

The first Act with its all-dominating figure of Bhīmasena, who everywhere represents vīra, is certainly predominantly heroic. Yet even here the presence of Draupadī, who, to speak in Bhavabhūti's words, is really karuṇasya mūrtiḥ, brings in the poet's favourite pathos. Indeed, the heroism of Bhīmasena would seem to heighten the pathos of Draupadī's condition, for though he had the ability to avenge her wrongs, he could not do so owing to his ultimate dependence on Yudhiṣṭhira's will. The pathos of the first Act reaches its height in the leave-taking scene between Draupadī and Bhīmasena. The second Act principally treats of śṛṅgāra, of course. But the picture of Bhānumatī with her affectionate heart torn with fear, created by the ominous dream, is pathetic enough. Even to the actual love scene between Duryodhana and Bhānumatī a kind of pathetic interest attaches, for we know that Duryodhana is a doomed man and his indulgence proceeds from rank recklessness. The third Act exhibits karuṇa and vīra in equal degree. Asvatthāman, bemoaning the death of his father, represents karuṇa and the quarrel between Asvatthāman and Karna develops vīra. The following three Acts exhibit

karuna pure and simple and in some of their situations Bhatta Nārāyaṇa is seen at his best in the delineation of pathos

It will thus be seen that while karuna or pathos is present in the first two Acts as a subordinate sentiment more or less, it divides the third Act equally with vīra and is the prevailing sentiment of the remaining three Acts. It must, therefore, be pronounced to be the angin or the principal sentiment of the drama.

VI TIME AND PLACE OF THE DRAMATIC ACTION

The classical drama of Europe knows of known as *Des Trois Unités* or the Three Unities. They the Unity of Time, the Unity of Place and the Unity of Action. The Greeks first developed them and European dramatists generally followed Greece. The Unity of Time meant that the action of the drama should not run period longer than a day, or the time actually required for representation on the stage. The Unity of Place similarly required that the events described in the drama should be represented as having occurred at one particular place only or its surroundings, or that the action should not be shifted from one place to another as it advances from scene to scene or Act to Act. The Unity of Action again laid down that there should be a logical connection between the various incidents of the drama and that they should all lead up to one central action which must never be lost sight of.

The Unities of Time and Place are based on the idea of naturalness. It was thus thought unnatural that an action running over a period of months or years together should be condensed within the short period of a few hours that were required for its representation on the stage. Similarly the ancients perhaps thought it improbable that the same stage which once represented one place should be made to stand for very many different localities, if the action were to change its abode now and then. The Unity of Action, however, was essential for the success of the drama as such. For it is easy to see if the various incidents were disconnected and did not lead up to a definite dénouement, they would scarcely constitute a drama. Thus while

the Unities of Time and Place were ultimately based on the more or less crude ideas of naturalness and probability as entertained by the ancients, who could not stand the necessary strain on their imagination, the Unity of Action had its foundation in strict scientific conception.

The Greek dramatists strictly observed these Unities not only in their comedies, but even in their tragedies, where it was more difficult to do so. The French dramatists in general and the classical school of English dramatists led by Ben Jonson in the golden era of English literature, were close followers of the Greeks. Sidney in his *Apology for Poetry* severely criticised those dramatists of his day that violated the Unities of Time and Place and his criticism, expressed in humorous language as it is, well deserves to be read. Shakespeare, the pioneer of the romantic school of English dramatists, represents a revolt against these three Unities. Almost all his historical dramas violate the Unities of Time and Place, the *Winter's Tale* being the most offending in this respect. The introduction of an underplot and the mingling of the tragic and the comic element, so common in Shakespeare and his school, were a direct violation of the Greek idea of the Unity of Action, but these in Shakespeare have been so managed as not to sin against the real unity of action that really counts in a drama.

Neither the Sanskrit dramatists nor the Sanskrit writers on dramaturgy evolved these three Unities as such. The essential unity of action was however secured by such devices as the arthaprakṛtis, avasthās and sandhis. But the introduction of an underplot (vide prominently the *Mṛcchakatika*) and the intermingling of the tragic and the comic elements were common in Sanskrit. The Unities of Time and Place were most flagrantly violated. The *Abhijñānasākuntala* for example represents an action

which runs over a period of six or seven years and in the *Uttararāmacarita* twelve years actually elapse between the first and the second Act. As regards place we find in the *Abhijñānaśākuntala* that while the scene of the first four Acts is laid in the penance-grove of Kāśyapa, the fifth and the sixth take us to Dusyanta's capital and in the seventh we have actually to descend from heaven on the lofty mountain Hemukūta. In the Sanskrit drama the action not only shifts from one place to another in this world, but is sometimes represented as taking place in the other world also. But one practice deserves to be noted in this connection. The Sanskrit dramatists generally confine the action of an act to one particular place or its surroundings, unless of course a journey is intended to be represented. Another curious fact to be observed is that the *Mālavikāgnimitra* of Kālidāsa rigidly follows the Unity of Place, for the entire action takes place in the king's palace and the surrounding garden. This may have been due to chance rather than to a consciousness of anything like the Greek rule of the Unity of Place.

Having made these general observations on the famous Three Unities, we proceed to lay down definitely the place and time of the various Acts constituting our play. The question of time is to be considered from two points of view first, the time that is actually taken by the incidents as they are represented on the stage and secondly, the time that is supposed to have elapsed between the various Acts, which in the end comes to mean the same as the time occupied by the entire action of the play.

Act i—The scene is first laid somewhere in the palace of Yudhisthira not far from Draupadi's quadrangle. For we find that after Bhīmasena sends his ultimatum to Yudhisthira to inform him that he is going to break away from his authority, he haughtily moves about and Sahadeva

follows him.^(r) Bhīmasena thinks he is going to the armoury but as a matter of steps his steps are turned towards Draupadī's quadrangle.^(s) Then both Bhīmasena and Sahadeva enter Draupadī's quadrangle where the rest of the action takes place

The time appears to be the morning from about 8 A. M. to 10 A. M. Draupadī had gone to offer salutation to Gāndhārī and we know that this customary ceremony was performed immediately after getting up in the morning. For in the second Act Bhānumatī goes to Gāndhārī for a similar purpose immediately after leaving her bed in the morning. Then again the grief caused to Draupadī by the insulting remarks of Bhānumatī is quite fresh. For her face is still bedimmed with tears, as she approaches Bhīmasena.^(t) This means that not much time has elapsed since the insult was received. So 8 A. M. to 10 A. M. in the morning accords well with the indications of time that we have for the action in this Act.

It is possible to find out the exact day and month of the action of the first Act. Towards the close of the Act we learn that the mission of Kṛṣṇa having failed, Yudhishthira orders hostilities to be commenced at once. So the action of the first Act takes place on the first day of the Mahābhārata war. Now the Mahābhārata war is supposed to have begun on the 13th day of the bright half of Mārga

- (r) Note the stage direction 'उद्धतः परिक्रामति' for Bhīmasena and 'तमेवादाच्छत्' for Sahadeva after 12, p 9.

- (s) Read:—

भीमसेन.—सरदेव, गच्छ त्वं उरुननुवर्तस्व । अहमप्यायुधामारं प्रविश्यायुध
सहायो भवानि ।

नरदेव — त्वं नैवनायुधामारम् । पाश्चात्याश्चतुःशालिनमिदम् ।

Act i, pp 9-10

- (t) Read 'अदे वयं दारदेनी दुःस्वप्नोन्मत्तानामन्तल्लस्यमितनयना आर्यसमीपमुप
सर्जति' p 11

śirsa. So this gives us the exact day and month of the action of the first Act

There is however some difficulty in this calculation. In the Prologue the Sūtradhāra speaks of Śarad or the autumn as being the current season^(u) Śarad is constituted by the months of Āśvina and Kārtika. As Bhīmasena enters immediately after the Sūtradhāra's description of the season, the time of the action of the first Act must naturally be supposed to be Śarad. If this is so, how can the 13th day of the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa be the day of the action of the first Act?

From the Mahābhārata we know that Kṛṣṇa went on his mission of peace to Duryodhana about the 13th day in the bright half of Kārtika. So the reference in the Prologue to Śarad as the season when Kṛṣṇa arrived at Yudhiṣṭhira's abode with a view to proceed to Duryodhana to negotiate peace is correct. But Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa ignores subsequent developments as recorded in the Mahābhārata. The epic tells us that about a week was spent in Kṛṣṇa's going to Hastināpura, his staying there for negotiating peace and his returning to the Pāṇḍavas on the failure of his mission. According to Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa all this happened in the course of an hour or two. For in the Prologue we learn about the arrival of Kṛṣṇa at Yudhiṣṭhira's residence with a view to go to Duryodhana and towards the close of the Act we come to know that he has returned on the failure of his mission of peace. Then again in the Mahābhārata, after the negotiations of peace prove unsuccessful, about three weeks elapse before hostilities actually commence.

- (u) Read 'ननु अमुमेव तावत्.....शरदसमयमाश्रित्य प्रवर्त्यतां संगीतकम्' p. 4.
It should be noted that in the last Act too the poet makes reference to Śarad. Compare 'अथ तु बलवत्तया शरदा-
तपस्य' p 166.

This time is spent by both the sides in collecting their armies and moving them to Kuruksetra and taking up battle positions there. But Bhatta Nārāyaṇa represents the war to have commenced immediately after the return of Kṛṣṇa on the failure of his mission.

It will thus be seen that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa is faithful to his original in representing Kṛṣṇa as having started on his mission of peace in Śarad. But the period of nearly a month, which elapses between this and the actual commencement of war, has been compressed by our poet into a couple of hours. This need not be considered to be a serious defect. For on the stage such shortening of time has often to be done.

Act ii—The scene of the Viśkambhaka is laid in the harem of Duryodhana, where the Kāñcukin is moving about as fast as his old legs can carry him in search of Queen Bhānumatī.

The action of the main Act takes place in the Bālo-dyāna, which was evidently a garden attached to the royal palace. After stanza 20 Duryodhana, Bhānumatī and her friend Suবাদanā move up to the palace on the mountain of wood, situated in a part of the Bālo-dyāna. Here the rest of the action is gone through.

Thirteen days elapse between the close of the first Act and the commencement of the second. The end of the first Act sees the war commenced. In the interval Bhīṣma has been rendered *hors de combat* and Abhimanyu has been slaughtered (v). The Mahābhārata tells us that Bhīṣma was

(v) Read —

आशक्ष्मन्नादन्वहपरशोत्तस्यापि जेता मुने-
स्तापायात् न पाण्डुस्तुभिरपि भीष्म इरै शायितः ।
श्रीशानैरुपदुर्गरिविजयश्चान्तस्य चैकाकिनो
शान्तस्यायमपानिद्वत्तुन प्रीतोऽभिमन्योर्धधात् ॥ ११ २

overthrown on the tenth day of the war and that Abhimanyu was killed on the thirteenth. The action of the second Act thus commences on the morning of the fourteen day. Another indication corroborates this conclusion. Towards the end of this Act we learn Arjuna's vow to kill Jayadratha before the sun sets on that day.^(w) The Act closes with Duryodhana's departure to help Jayadratha. Arjuna was successful in carrying out his vow and we know from the Mahābhārata that Jayadratha met his death at the hands of Arjuna on the fourteenth day of the war. Thus the action of the second Act happens on the fourteenth day of the war

The actual hours of the day appear to be from about 8 A. M. to 11 A. M. At the commencement of the Act we find that Bhānumatī has just returned from her dutiful call on Gāndhārī and has gone to the Bālodyāna for the performance of some sacred rites.^(x) For this she must naturally have taken her bath. So 8 A. M. would appear to be the proper time for her going into the Bālodyāna. The description of the Bālodyāna, which the Kañcukin gives (Text pp. 30-31), contains clear indications that the time is the early morning.^(y) Later on the sun grows difficult to look at.^(z) This must be about 10 A. M. Then after a while the party moves to dāruparvataprasādā, where the rest of the action takes

(w) Read 'अथ खलु पुत्रवधामर्षितेन गाण्डीविनानस्तमिते दिवसनाथे तस्य (जयद्रथस्य) वध प्रतिज्ञातः' Act ii, p 50

(x) Read 'एषा भानुमती देवी पत्यु समरविजयाशंसया निर्वर्तितयुरपादवन्दनाय-प्रभृत्यारम्भनियमा बालोद्याने तिष्ठति' Act ii, p. 26

(y) Note 'प्रभातकालरमणीयमयतस्ते बालोद्यानम्' 'इदमपरममुष्मिन्नक्षयसि रमणीय-तरम्' Act ii, p 31

(z) Read 'विगलत्सन्ध्यासंरागप्रसन्नदुरालोकमण्डलो जातो भगवान् दिवसनाथः'
'पूरितप्रतिज्ञैव रिपुर्दृष्टेक्षणीयो जातो भगवान् सहस्राकिरणा'
Act ii, pp 39-40

place This must have taken about an hour more. Thus the whole action of the second Act would occupy about three hours in the morning from 8 A. M. to 11 A. M.

Act iii—The scene of the Pravesaka to this Act is laid in the residence of the demon couple, not far from the battle-field. For from this place the demons are able to hear the tumult of the war and see what is actually happening there viz the slaughter of Drona^(a). They also see Aśvatthāman advancing towards the battle-field.^(b)

The first three scenes of the third Act, wherein Aśvatthāman, the charioteer and Krpa take part, occur in a place very near the battle-field, but not actually thereon. For, Aśvatthāman, being desirous to go to the actual theatre of the war, starts for it^(c), but before he actually reaches it, he sees the rout of the Kaurava armies and observes even great warriors like Karna running away. In this very place Drona's charioteer Asvasena arrives and informs Aśvatthāman of the slaughter of Drona. It is also here that Krpa sees Aśvatthāman and the conversation between the two takes place.

The fourth scene, consisting of the dialogue between Duryodhana and Karna, and the fifth marked by the quarrel between Aśvatthāman and Karna, are laid in a region at some distance from the battle-field, though not very far

(a) Read —

राक्षसी—अरे रुधिरप्रिय, किं नु खल्वेन महान् फलफलं श्रूयते ।

राक्षस —पसागन्धे, एव खलु धृष्टयन्त्रेण द्रोगे केशेष्वाकृष्यासिपत्रेण व्यापायते ।*

—Act iii, p. 59

(b) Read —

राक्षस—(नेपथ्याभिमुखमवलोक्य) पसागन्धे, एव खल्वस्वत्यामाकृष्टासिपत्रं
इह पयागच्छति ।

—Act iii, p. 60

(c) Note Aśvatthāman's words 'यावत् समस्तयुधमवतरामि' and his stage-direction 'सायट्यम् पश्चिम्यागतो विलोक्य च'.

away from it. There is in this place a Nyagrodha tree in the shade of which the king and his friend are sitting.^(d) Aśvatthāman and Kṛpa have to move over some distance before they arrive here.^(e) Though the place is thus somewhat removed from the actual scene of operations, it is at the same time near enough for the party to be able to hear Bhīmasena's challenge to all Kaurava warriors to protect Duśśāsana who has fallen in his hands.^(f)

It will thus be seen that the action of the third Act takes place in three different places near about the battlefield, though not actually thereon.

The time of the third Act is determined with reference to events described in its Praveśaka. From this we know that Ghatotkaca has been killed and his mother Queen Hidimbā is immersed in grief.^(g) According to the Mahābhārata the death of Ghatotkaca took place at mid-night on the fourteenth day. This means that the action of the third Act belongs to the fifteenth day of the war. This is confirmed by another indication. Towards the close of the Praveśaka we learn from the demon's speech that Drona is

(d) Read 'कृप'—(विलोक्य) वरुण, एव दुर्योधनं हतपुत्रेण सहास्यं न्यग्रोधच्छाया-
यामुपविष्टस्तिष्ठति । तदुपसर्पाय ।—Act III, p 78

(e) Note the stage-direction 'परिक्रामत' for Aśvatthāman and Kṛpa, when they decide to go to the region where Duryodhana is staying

(f) For Bhīmasena's challenge see text pp. 88-89 and note especially the stage-direction 'सर्वे आकर्णयन्ति' given immediately after this.

(g) Read :—

राक्षसः—अयि मुस्थिते नट पुत्रशोकसंतप्तहृदयां स्वामिनीं हिदिम्बा-
देवीं प्रेक्षितुं गतोऽस्मि ।

राक्षसी—रुधिरप्रिय, अद्यापि स्वामिन्या हिदिम्बादेव्या घटोत्कचशोको
नोपशाम्यति ।

—Act III, p 56

being killed and early in the course of the third Act we get the news of Drona's decapitation. From the Mahābhārata we know that Drona's head was chopped off by Dhṛṣṭadyumna on the fifteenth day of the war. So the fifteenth is the day of the action of the third Act.

The actual hours of the action of the third Act would appear to be from about 1 P. M. to 2-30 P. M. These are fixed for the following considerations. First, the Mahābhārata says that Drona was decapitated in the afternoon of the fifteenth day. Secondly, it will be seen from below that our author describes the action of the third, fourth and fifth Acts as being almost continuous. Towards the end of the fifth Act there is a reference to the sun setting^(h). This was probably at 6-30 P. M. So the actions of Acts iii, iv and v must be assigned to afternoon hours closing with 6-30 P. M. That is why we have given 1 P. M. to 2-30 P. M. as the hours for the action of Act iii. There are two considerations which are favourable to these hours. Rudhira-priya, we know, is thirsty⁽ⁱ⁾ and Duryodhana and Karna, we have already seen, are sitting in the shade of the Nyagrodha tree. This accords well with 1 P. M. to 2-30 P. M., which we have supposed to be hours of the action of this Act.

Act iv—The action of the fourth Act commences actually on the field of battle. Karna and Duryodhana had gone there to protect Duṣṣāsana from Bhīmasena. Arjuna engaged them both in order to facilitate the fulfilment of his brother Bhīmasena's vow with regard to Duṣṣāsana. In this fight Duryodhana was wounded and became unconscious. Seeing him in this helpless condition his charioteer

(h) Read 'अस्त भास्वान् प्रयात चरु विप्रमिष्य सहिषन्ता बलानि ॥'

(i) Note Rudhirapriya's words 'बलवदास्मि विपासितः' Act iii, p. 56

was removing him from the actual battlefield to a place of safety. This is how the Act commences

Duryodhana's chariot is then taken to the same Nyagrodha tree, where Duryodhana and Karna were sitting and whence they had gone to the battle-field to help Duśśāsana. We now learn that this tree has thick foliage and is situated on the bank of a lotus-lake from which a cool and fragrant breeze is blowing^(j) This is the region where the action of the rest of the Act takes place. Thus a part of the actual battle-field and the Nyagrodha tree are the places of the action of the fourth Act

About half an hour must be supposed to have elapsed between the end of the third Act and the commencement of the fourth. During this time Bhīmasena had his revenge on Duśśāsana and Duryodhana became wounded in his fight with Arjuna. Kṛpa also arrived on the battle-field and, encouraging the flying Kaurava army, was advancing towards Karna, who was now fighting single-handed with Arjuna.^(k) Thus the actual hours of the action of the fourth Act, which commences half an hour after the end of the third, would be 3 P. M. to 5 P. M. During this time Sundaraka gives his description of the exploits and death of Vṛśasena and delivers Karna's message to Duryodhana and returns with a counter-message from him to Karna

Act v—The action in the whole of this Act takes place in the shade of the same Nyagrodha tree, where Duryodhana has been sitting right up from the middle of the

(j) Read 'अये, अयमसौ सरसीसरोजविलोलनगरमिश्रितलमातरिश्वसवाहितसान्द्र-
विसलयो न्यग्रोधपादप ।' Act iv, p 94

(k) Read 'कथमेव.. ..प्रदत्तमात्मवलमात्मासयन् कृप किरीटिनामियुक्तमङ्गरजमु-
सरति' —Act iv, pp. 92-93

third Act, except for about half an hour when he had gone to the battle-field in his attempt to save his brother. It is here that Dhṛtarāstra and Gāndhārī see their only surviving son⁶⁷ and it is here that all the subsequent events in this Act take place

The actual hours of the action of this Act would be from 5 P. M. to 6-30 P. M. For, we know that the Act commences immediately after the fourth and that towards the end there is a reference to the sun setting

It will thus be seen that the action of Acts iii, iv, and v is continuous and occupies, according to Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa, one afternoon viz. that of the fifteenth day of the war. We have here to point out that in so depicting the action to be continuous, our poet departs from the Mahābhārata. In these three Acts of the drama we have the deaths of Drona, Duṣṣāṇa, Viśasena and Karna. Now according to the Mahābhārata Drona was decapitated on the 15th day of the war and Duṣṣāṇa, Viśasena and Karna were killed on the 17th day. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa represents all these warriors as having met their death on the same day viz. the fifteenth.

Act vi—Yudhisthira's camp, situated at considerable distance from the battle-field, is the scene of the occurrences in this Act. As Draupadī and her maid are residing in this camp, it must have been at safe distance from the actual battle-field. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that communication between Yudhisthira and people like Śhaḍdeva and Kṛṣṇa, who are actually on the battle-

(1) Read —

गान्धारी—जात यदि त्वय जीवति मे वत्सस्तत्कथय वस्मिन् देशे वर्तते ।
सजय—नन्येन नदायज एक एव न्यमोदच्छायागमुपविष्टस्तिष्ठति ।

field, is maintained by means of couriers ^(m) The camp of Yudhisthira was evidently pitched in a shady place and on the bank of the Sarasvatī For, when the demon Cārvāka arrives there, the shade and the cool breeze appear to him to be sufficient to remove his fatigue.⁽ⁿ⁾

This Act records the deaths of Śalya, Śakuni and Duryodhana According to the Mahābhārata these three events occurred on the eighteenth and last day of the war. As, according to our author, the events of the three previous Acts happened in the afternoon of the fifteenth day, two days must be supposed to have elapsed between the end of Act v and the beginning of Act vi.

As regards the actual hours of the action of this Act, they would appear to be 3 P M to 5 P M From the Mahābhārata we know that the last fight between Bhīmasena and Duryodhana took place in the afternoon of the 18th day. When the demon Cārvāka arrives at Yudhisthira's camp, he is feeling thirsty The autumnal sun's heat is intense.^(o) So 3 P M to 5 P M would not be unreasonable as the hours of the action of this Act

It would then follow that the engagement between Yudhisthira and Salya and that between Sahadeva and Sakuni took place in the morning Yudhisthira then retired to his camp for rest and Bhīmasena, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa began their search for Duryodhana

(m) Note that Yudhisthira first sends his man Budhaka to convey to Sahadeva certain instructions about instituting search for Duryodhana Secondly, Pañcālaka arrives at this camp with news from the battle-field at the command of Kṛṣṇa Thirdly, Yudhisthira sends his chamberlain Jayandhara with his last message to Sahadeva

(n) Note Cārvāka's words 'छाययेयानया सरस्वतीशिशिखरद्वन्द्वशो मरुता चानेन विगतकुम्भो मनिव्यानि।' Act vi, p. 165

(o) Read Cārvāka's words 'अथ तु वल्लभया शरदातपस्य' Act vi, p 166

Another point to be noted in connection with the question of time is this Bhatta Nārāyaṇa represents the coronation of Yudhisthira as taking place immediately after the slaughter of Duryodhana. According to the Mahābhārata some time elapsed before this event took place. As Duryodhana lay on the battle-field in the throes of death, Asvatthāman, Kṛpa and Kṛtavarmaṇ went to see him. Asvatthāman severely censured the Pāṇḍavas in the presence of the dying monarch for their many iniquities. Duryodhana was pleased with this denunciation and appointed Asvatthāman the last Commander-in-chief of his armies in order that he might carry on the work of revenge even after his death. Thus satisfied that the new commander of his armies, or whatever was left of them, would avenge the wrongs done to him, Duryodhana breathed his last.

During the night of that day, that is, the eighteenth day of the war, Asvatthāman, with the help of Kṛpa and Kṛtavarmaṇ, performed a most dastardly and treacherous deed. He visited the Pāṇḍava camp clandestinely and killed Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Uttamaujas, Yudhāmanyu, the five sons of Draupadī and Sikhaṇḍin, while they were asleep. In the confusion that was caused by this night-attack, soldiers running about unarmed in an attempt to escape from the camp, were done to death by Kṛpa and Kṛtavarmaṇ, who were standing at the entrance.

Yudhisthira and his brothers, who were encamping elsewhere, were shocked to learn this new disaster. Draupadī insisted that Asvatthāman be immediately killed. Bhīmasena, her ever ready champion, and Nakula set out in pursuit of the Brāhmana warrior. Kṛṣṇa, Yudhisthira and Arjuna followed them. Eventually they all succeeded in wresting from Asvatthāman the precious jewel on his head as a token of subjugation. Draupadī was satisfied

It was a fine day, and the weather was very pleasant. The children were very happy and played for hours. They had a picnic under a big tree and enjoyed the food very much. The day was very warm and the sun was shining brightly. The children were very tired when they went to bed, but they were all very happy and had a very good time.

[illegible]

VII THE FIVE SANDHIS IN THE VENĪSAMHARA

In the preceding Section we saw that out of the three unities formulated by the ancient Greeks, the unities of time and place are unknown to Sanskrit dramaturgy. The doctrine of the unity of action, though not exactly in the sense in which it was understood in ancient Greece, is however developed in India. Unity of action is secured in a Sanskrit drama by the employment of what are known as the five sandhis or junctures of the action.

The development of the plot of a drama can be looked at from an objective as well as a subjective point of view. Objectively speaking, the plot of a drama has five elements which are known as arthaprakṛtis. Subjectively, the development of the action goes through five stages, known as avasthās, which represent the progressive attainment of the goal by the hero. The five elements of the plot combined with the five stages of the development of the action give rise to the five junctures.

The five arthaprakṛtis or elements of the plot are *bīja*, *bindu*, *patākā*, *prakāś* and *kārya* ^(p). *Bīja* or the germ is the initial circumstance from which the action springs ^(q). *Bindu* or the drop is constituted by the incident, which secures the continuity of the plot, when

(p) Read —

बीजविन्दुप्रताकाप्रकाशकार्यलक्षणा ।
अर्थप्रकृतयः पञ्च ता एताः परिकीर्तिताः ॥

—दशरूपक i. 18

(q) Read —

अल्पमात्रं समुद्दिष्टं द्रव्या यद्विस्तपति ॥ ६५ ॥
फलस्य प्रथमो हेतुर्बीजं तदभिधीयते ।

—नाट्यदर्पण vi

it appears to have been disturbed by the introduction of secondary matter ^(r) It is so called, because, like a drop of oil on water, it spreads all round, covers apparently irrelevant events and brings them in line with the main theme ^(s) Patākā or an episode is some incidental matter, which spreads over a considerable part of the drama and helps the principal action. ^(t) Prakāś or an episodical event is of the same nature as patākā, but of limited duration and secondary importance ^(u) Kārya or the *dénouement* is the

(r) Note —

अत्रात्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।
तत्रात्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ॥

—नाट्यशास्त्र २१२ 22

अत्रात्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।

—दशरथ 17, साहित्यदर्पण vi. 66

कृते अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।

तत्रात्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ॥

—भाष्यप्रकाश

(s) Vide 'अत्रात्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् । जले तिलविन्दुवत् प्रसारित्वाद् विन्दुवत् एव भवेत् ।'

(t) See —

अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।
अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ॥

—नाट्यशास्त्र २१२. 23

अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।

—साहित्यदर्पण vi. 67

(u) Read:—

कृते अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।
अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ॥

—नाट्यशास्त्र २१२. 24

अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।

—साहित्यदर्पण vi. 68

अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ।

अत्रापि विन्दे तद्विन्देऽप्यत्रम् ॥

—भाष्यप्रकाशिका

end or object, which being achieved the drama comes to a close ^(v)

Kārya or the *denouement* is reached by the action through the five *avasthās* or stages. They are ārambha, yatna, prāptyāsā, niyatāpti and phalāgama ^(w) Ārambha or the beginning represents the eagerness for the achievement of the principal fruit, displayed by the hero or by some one else acting in his interest ^(x) Yatna or the effort means determined activity for the attainment of the goal. ^(y) Prāptyāsā or the hope of achievement represents the stage where success is felt to be possible on a consideration of the means of achievement available and of the obstacles in its way ^(z) Niyatāpti or certainty of achievement is the stage where success seems certain owing to the removal of obstacles ^(a) Phalāgama or the attainment of the

(v) Note —

यदाधिकारितं कृतं नश्यदभासं प्रयुज्यते ।

तदर्धो यः सन्नारम्भस्तन् कार्यं परिकीर्तितम् ॥

—नाट्यशास्त्र xix 25

कार्यं निर्वाहकृत् फले ।

—प्रतापरुद्रयशोभूषण p 107

(w) Vide —

अवस्था पञ्च कार्यस्य शरण्यस्य फलार्थिभिः ।

आरम्भयत्नप्राप्त्यशाऽनियतानिचलानि ॥

—दशरूपक 1 19

(x) Read —

मवेदारम्भ औत्सुक्यं यन्मुत्सुक्यकलसिद्धये ।

—साहित्यदर्पण vi. 71

(y) See —

प्रयत्नस्तु फलालागी व्यापारोऽतिस्वरान्वितः ।

—साहित्यदर्पण vi. 72

(z) Note —

उपादापादशङ्कायां प्राप्त्याशा प्राक्सिद्धयः ।

—दशरूपक 1. 21

(a) Read —

अनादम्भायनं प्राविर्नियतातिः सनिश्चिता ।

—दशरूपक i 21

fruit represents the accomplishment of the object in its entirety.⁽⁶⁾

We have seen above that the association of the five elements of the plot with the five stages of the action gives rise to the five sandhis or junctures^(c) These are mukha or opening, pratimukha or progression, garbha or development, vimarsa or avamarsa or pause and nirvahana or conclusion.⁽⁷⁾ The mukha-sandhi arises from bija and ārambha, the pratimukha from bindu and vatna, the garbha from patākā and prāpti-kā, the vimarsa from prakāśa and niyātāpti and the nirvahana from kārya and phalāgama. The Dasarūpa and the Sāhityadarpana definitely lay down that the junctures depend upon the elements and the stages. They however opine that this association should not be regarded as absolutely rigid. Thus according to the above arrangement patākā forms part of the garbha-sandhi. But if we observe existing dramas, we find that the episode often runs into vimarsa and even nirvahana.

We shall now proceed to describe briefly the five sandhis.

(b) Note —

सापस्या फलयोगे साय गम्यफलोदये ।

—साहित्यदर्पण vi 73

(c) Read —

अयं नृपतय पथ पथारस्थासमन्विता ॥ 22

यथासंख्येन जायन्ते मुग्धाया पथ सपथ ॥...23

—दशरूपक 1

यथागण्यभवत्वाभिराभिर्योगास्तु पथमि ।

पथर्षेति नृपस्य भागा स्यु पथ सपथ ॥

—साहित्यदर्पण vi 74

(d) Note —

शुख प्रतिमुख गमो विमर्शश्च तथैव हि ।

तथा ।

The mukha-sandhi sees the sowing of the seed of the action. In this there is a possibility of the development of various matters and sentiments. It is here that definite beginning of the action is made (e)

The pratimukha marks the progress of the development of the seed. This progress is sometimes manifest and sometimes not quite so. The reason for the latter characteristic is that some secondary matter is here introduced and it obscures the development of the seed (f)

The garbha contains, as its name suggests, (g) the final fruit in an embryonic form. The seed, which has been steadily growing during the course of the two preceding sandhis, is here seen and lost by turns and a search is made to find it out. Thus, though apparently the main action seems to have been retarded owing evidently to the introduction of the patākā or episode, in reality definite development towards the *dénouement* is here observed (h)

(e) See —

यत्र बीजसमुत्पत्तिर्नानार्यरससम्भवा ॥ 76

प्रारम्भेण समाप्तुक्ता तन्मुखं परिकीर्तितम् । . 77

—साहित्यदर्पण vi

(f) Vide —

बीजस्योद्घाटनं यत् दृष्टमष्टमिव क्वचित् ।

मुगधस्तस्य सर्वत्र तद्वै प्रतिमुखं स्मृतम् ॥

—नाट्यशास्त्र xix 38

लक्ष्मालक्ष्यतयोद्धेदस्तस्य [बीजस्य] प्रतिमुखं भवेद् ।

विन्दुप्रदरनामुगमाद् ॥ 30

—दशरूपक i

(g) Compare 'फलस्य गर्भविरसाद् गर्भे' साहित्यदर्पण

(h) Read —

उद्धेदस्तस्य बीजस्य प्राविशतिरेव वा ।

पुनश्चान्वेन यत्र स गर्भ इति साज्ञेन ॥

—नाट्यशास्त्र xix 39

The vimarśa or avamarśa marks a pause in the progress of the action towards the *dénouement*. Here the action seems to have received a check or reversal on account of some obstacle which neither the hero nor the heroine nor any one else had either expected or even thought of. However, the obstacle is removed in the end and the achievement of the final goal becomes certain ⁽¹⁾

The nirvāhana witnesses the conclusion of the dramatic action. Here the poet brings together all the different threads of the narrative, which are scattered over the previous junctures, and makes them converge on the central

[Continued from the preceding page]

गर्भस्तु दृष्टनष्टस्य बीजस्यान्वेषणं मुहुः ।

द्वादशाङ्गं पताका स्यान्न वा स्यात् प्राप्तिमव ॥

—दशरूपक 1. 36

फलप्रधानोपायस्य प्रागुद्भिन्नस्य किञ्चन ॥ 78

गर्भो यत्र सङ्गदेहो ह्यासान्वेषणवान् मुहुः । 79

—साहित्यदर्पण ११

From the above definition of the Daśarūpaka it will be noticed that patakā is not absolutely necessary for the garbha-sandhi. Prāptyśūn must of course be there. Says the Daśarūpaka on the above definition: 'तत्र श्रौत्सर्गिकत्वेन प्राताया पताकाया अनियमं दर्शयति "पताका स्यान्न वा" इत्यनेन । प्राप्तिमवस्तु स्यादेवेति दर्शयति "स्यात्" इति ।'

(1) Note —

गर्भाभिर्भिज्जीजार्थो विलोमनकृतोऽपि वा ।

क्रोधव्यसनजो वापि स विमर्श इति स्थित

—नाट्यशास्त्र XIX 40

क्रोधेनावृष्टेयत्र व्यसनाद्वा विलोमनात् ।

गर्भनिर्भिज्जीजार्थं सोऽवमर्श इति स्थित ॥

—दशरूपक 1. 43

यत्र मुख्यफलोपाय उद्भिज्जो गर्भतोऽधिक ॥ 79

शापाद्यै सान्तरायश्च स विमर्श इति स्थित । 80

—साहित्यदर्पण ११

theme The purpose with which the drama began is served and the fruit is gained.^(j)

Such, in short, is the general nature of the five sandhis, which are intended to secure unity of action in a drama. The theory of junctures sounds very well on paper. It is evidently intended to apply to dramas of five acts, which represent the norm. In actual practice, however, it is always possible to discover the existence of these five sandhis even in a drama, which evidently lacks unity of action. The Venīsamhāra, for instance, in our opinion at any rate, does not contain unity of action. It seems to have been made of scenes and acts, which are but loosely strung together. Yet it is not impossible to show that the five junctures with their main constituents are present here. We now proceed actually to do this.

The mukha-sandhi, which arises from the combination of bīja and ārambha, covers the first Act of the Venīsamhāra. The bīja or seed is here seen in Yudhiṣṭhira's readiness to commence hostilities^(k) on the failure of Kṛṣṇa's mission of

(j) Vide —

समानयनमर्थानां मुखाद्यानां सञ्जीविनाम् ।
नान भावोन्तराणां उद्देश्येऽभिर्वहणं तु तत् ॥

—नाट्यशास्त्र २१२ 41

जीजवन्तो मुखाद्यर्थो विप्रकीर्णो यथायथम् ॥ 48
ऐकार्थ्यमुपनीयन्ते यत्र निर्वहणं हि तत् । 49

—दशरूपक १

The Sāhityadarpaṇa gives the same definition as that of the Daśarūpaka, but instead of ऐकार्थ्यम् it reads परार्थम्

मुखमन्वयादयो यत्र विकीर्णो जीजमयुता ।
महाप्रयोजनं गच्छति तस्मिन्निर्वहणमुच्यते ॥

—सुयाकर

(k) Compare 'यथा च वेणमिहारे द्रौपदीकेशतयमनेहेतुर्भूमिकोपोपचितपुषिप्रैः-
त्माहो जीजमिति' दशरूपक under 1 17a

help the progress of the main action, may also be included under the *patākā*. *Prāptyāsā* is represented by Bhīmasena's speech from behind the curtain on pp. 88-89, wherein he announces his intention of butchering Duśśāsana, who has fallen in his clutches, and by the speeches of Asvatthāman on pp 90-91, in which the drinking of Dussāsana's blood by Bhīmasena is referred to Stanzas 2, 3, 4, and 9 of Act iv may also represent *prāptyāsā* in so far as they shadow forth the death of Duryodhana ⁽ⁿ⁾

The *vimarsa-sandhi* covers the fifth Act and a large part of the sixth as well ^(o) It arises from the combination of *prakarī* and *niyatāpti*. The *prakarī* is represented by Dhrtarāstra's attempt to bring about peace, which seems to check the final attainment of the goal by the hero. The doings of Cārvāka in the sixth Act also partake of the nature of episodical event and may well be styled *prakarī*. The disappearance of Duryodhana, consequent on the new vow of Bhīmasena, is a pertinent part of the *vimarsa-sandhi*, because it definitely jeopardizes the fulfilment of Bhīmasena's vow and forms an obstacle in the way of the attainment of the final goal. *Niyatāpti* or certainty of achievement is seen in the report of Pāñcālaka on p. 152 that

- (n) With reference to the *garbha-sandhi*, in which *patākā* figures, it may be noted that the *Sāhityadarpaṇa* regards the doings of Bhīmasena in the *Venīsamhāra* as constituting the *patākā*. This is evidently due to the fact that Viśvanātha considers Yudhiṣṭhira the hero of the drama. Read 'यथापि प्रासङ्गिकं दृष्टं पताकेत्यभिधीयते । यथा रामचरिते सुग्रीवादे । वेण्यां भीमादे , शायुन्तले विदूषकस्य अरितम् ।' साहित्यदर्पण vi, p 280 (निर्णयसागर)

- (o) Note 'यथा च वेणीसहारे इयोषनरधिरावतभीमसेनागमपर्यन्त' [विमर्श] ।
 "तीर्णे भीष्ममहोदधी . ' vi 1 इत्यत्र त्यत्यायशेषे जये इत्यादिभिर्यिजयप्रत्यर्थि-
 समस्तभीष्मादिमहारथवधादयस्मरिनेवान्ताविजयायमर्शनादयमर्शन दर्शितमित्ययमर्श-
 सन्धि ।' दशरूप on : 43

Duryodhana is found. Lord Kṛṣṇa's message to Yudhiṣṭhira (p. 160) that festivities may be commenced in expectation of Bhīmasena's victory over Duryodhana also embodies *niyatāpti*.

The last sandhi *nirvahana* is marked by the conclusion of the dramatic action. It arises from the combination of *kārya* and *phalāgama*. The *kārya* in the present drama is the killing of Duryodhana. Act vi 37, wherein Bhīmasena announces that he has crossed the vast ocean of his great vow, embodies the *kārya*. The *phalāgama* is the binding of Draupadī's mass of hair referred to in vi 42. The *nirvahana-sandhi* thus extends from vi 37 to the end of the drama. Its central point is the recognition of Bhīmasena by the chamberlain,—Bhīmasena, who on his entrance, is, owing to the false story of Cārvāka, mistaken by them all to be the victorious Duryodhana.^(p)

(p) Read 'यथा वेणीसहारे—“ कञ्चुकी—(तपस्य सहर्षम्) महाराज, वर्धसे । अयं खल्वायुष्मान् भीमसेनः सुयोधनक्षतजारुणीकृतसकलशरीरो द्रुलक्ष्यव्यक्तिः । अलमधुना संदेहेन । ” इत्यादिना द्रौपदीशिसंयमना निजस्थानोपक्षिप्तानामेकार्थतया योजनम् । ’ दशरूपक on *nirvahana-sandhi* is defined.

VIII BHATTA NĀRĀYANA AS A DRAMATIST

In the galaxy of Sanskrit dramatists Bhatta Nārāyana is a star of the second magnitude only. Beside the dazzling brilliance of Kālidāsa, Bhavabhūti and Śrīharsa, his light fades dim. Yet the Venīsamhāra enjoys a popularity, which is surpassed only by the Sākuntala and the Uttararāmacarita. This is due more to the dature of the plot of the drama than to its intrinsic merits. The story of the national epic was already popular. When the poet infused new life into it by dramatising it and thus made it even more realistic, it was bound to captivate the people. And the Venīsamhāra captivated the people so much that the ordinary man learnt his epic story more from this play than from the epic itself. One proof of the popularity of the Venīsamhāra is furnished by the fact that, in company with the Ratnāvalī of Śrīharsa it is most drawn upon by writers on dramaturgy to illustrate the various topics in their science. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyana also exercised considerable influence on succeeding dramatists. The Bālarāmāyana of Rājasekhara (900 A. D.) and the Candakauśika of Ksemīvara (900 A. D.) show clear traces of the influence of the Venīsamhāra.

As observed before, Bhatta Nārāyana excels in the delineation of pathos. That sentiment in fact forms his special province. In some places his pathos rises to the level of Bhavabhūti's. Asvatthāman in the first half of the third Act, Duryodhana in the fourth and the fifth and Yudhiṣṭhira and Draupadī in the sixth represent his chief pathetic figures. The poet was also proficient in portraying individual characters. From this point of view Duryodhana and Bhānumatī have received the poet's best attention. On

them he has lavished all his skill. The picture of Bhānumati is confined to the second Act, but the portrayal of Duryodhana's character is continued all through the following Acts. The robust violent Bhīmasena, who chafes at the authority of his elder brother at every step, but does not really wish to break loose from it in spite of his utterance to the contrary, the hot fiery-tempered Aśvatthāman with his intense filial affection and fine sportsman-like spirit, the cunning crooked Karna with his meanness and self-conceit, the old dotting Dhṛtarāstra with his unscrupulousness and blind parental affection—all these have been skilfully painted. The devoted faithful Buddhimatikā and the old garrulous Vinayandhara have also received due attention from the poet.

Proficiency in delineating sentiments and in portraying brilliant character-sketches, though a valuable endowment in itself no doubt, does not alone contribute to the poet's success as a dramatist. He must possess the art of dramatic construction. The various scenes that he paints must be so woven together that they gradually lead to the *dénouement* and create the impression of a consistent whole. Considered from this point of view Bhatta Nārāyaṇa is a failure. Though a great poet, he is not a dramatic artist. The *Venīsamhāra* constitutes a series of brilliant scenes, which, though so beautiful and impressive from the point of view of characterisation and the development of sentiment, are loosely strung together and thus fail in creating the impression of a well constructed drama. It may be that the nature of the plot of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's play, namely, the story of the epic running over such great length, rather than an intrinsic defect in his genius, is responsible for this. But there is no denying the fact that the *Venīsamhāra* is an inartistically constructed drama. This will be clear from the following brief survey of the six Acts from the point of view of construction

The first Act is highly successful. The seed is here well sown. But the two next Acts, though so successful in themselves, have hardly any relevancy as constituent parts of the drama *Venīsamhāra*. In fact, while we enjoy the delightful love-scene between Duryodhana and Bhānumatī, sympathise with Aśvatthāman in his pathetic lamentations and observe with interest his quarrel with Karna, we are scarcely aware that we are reading a drama wherein the tying of Draupadi's hair is the principal topic. Only towards the close of these Acts does the poet tell us something of the progress of the war, whose conclusion is to lead to the *Venīsamhāra*, by referring to the vow of Arjuna to kill Jayadratha and by making Bhīmasena declare from behind the curtain his intention of butchering Dussāsana, who has fallen in his clutches. These devices appear to represent the author's conscious efforts to link the two more or less detached Acts to the main theme. The fourth Act is mainly narrative and we hardly know that we are reading a drama when we listen to Sundaraka's long descriptions. Even as a *Viśkambhaka* it is a failure, for here information is deliberately thrust on us. No poet who knew anything of what dramatic construction meant would have composed such an Act. The fifth Act, though full of action, is not faultless in its construction, for its scenes do not logically follow one another and have no definite dramatic purpose to serve. The sixth Act suffers from the abrupt character of its commencement and from the fact that its first scene is made to serve the purpose of a *Viśkambhaka*. It will thus be seen that from the point of view of dramatic construction, the *Venīsamhāra* leaves much to be desired.

Another defect of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's genius is that he lacks sense of proportion. We have already seen how this defect leads the poet to assign to Duryodhana more

importance and to elaborate his character with greater care than he gives to his hero Bhīmasena. The same is true in the case of the heroine also. Draupadī is the heroine no doubt. But she does not receive from the poet half the attention and care that he bestows on Bhānumatī. Bhānumatī's presence, it is true, is not felt outside the second Act, but in that Act she absorbs our mind as Draupadī nowhere does. The same deficiency in sense of proportion is at the bottom of the poet's failure to recognise the proper limitations of the narrative element in a drama. That is how he comes to give us such an Act as the fourth. Similarly, want of the sense of proportion is displayed in the character of Sundaraka's speeches. How is it that a common soldier, who is not cultured enough to be able to speak in Sanskrit, gives us such an elaborate metaphor as that occurring at the end of his preliminary speech and indulges in such high-flown descriptions of the battle scenes? It is true this particular anomaly is found in other dramatists as well, notably in Bhavabhūti, but that does not lessen its anomalous or disproportionate character.

But then one feature which cannot fail to strike a careful reader of the *Venisamhāra* is that the author shows himself to be quite familiar with the stage-craft. The various scenes composing his drama have been arranged with a definite eye to their representation on the stage and the exits and entrances of different characters have been skilfully managed. Situations sometimes arise during the course of the drama when some characters already on the stage have apparently to remain idle thereon, while characters entering anew go through their conversation or soliloquies. On such occasions Bhatta Nārāyaṇa always devises some means of keeping these apparently unoccupied characters engrossed in something so as to avoid the picture of some characters standing listlessly on the stage.

Three specific instances of such situations may be noted. In Act i when the dialogue between Draupadī and her maid, which forms the second scene of the Act (text pp. 11-13), is held, Bhīmasena and Sahadeva, who are already on the stage, will, it appears, have to remain there quite unoccupied during the time. But as we saw before^(q) the poet makes Bhīmasena turn his face away in anger and Sahadeva stands looking at him, wondering what he would say or do next. Then in the third Act during the time required by Kṛpa to go through his soliloquy (text pp. 67-68), Asvatthāman, who is already on the stage, is represented as being in a swoon and the charioteer as engaged in restoring him to consciousness.^(r) Thirdly, during the long soliloquy of Sundaraka in Act iv (text pp. 99-103), Duryodhana, who is already on the stage, is represented as being in a mood of extreme despondency and consequently sits in his chariot with his head hanging down, while his charioteer looks at him with great concern.^(s) While Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa thus displays close acquaintance with stage-craft, it seems surprising how the fact that the fourth Act would not be successful on the stage did not strike him.

Lastly we want to say a few words about Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's attitude towards nature. It must here be noted that the places where the poet describes nature in the Venīsamhāra are not many. First we have a description of the autumnal phenomena in the Prastāvanā on p. 4. This description strikes us as purely conventional. Then the early morning phenomena are described in the second Act on pp. 30-31. There is no doubt here the poet seems to have observed nature at first hand and the description appears

(q) See p. 36 above.

(r) Vide p. 57 above.

(s) Read p. 144 of Notes to our edition of the Venīsamhāra.

realistic Further in the same Act on pp 44-45 we have a description of the violent wind. It is no doubt a poetic description, but seems to have been composed by the exercise of the imagination rather than by actual observation. Besides it is inappropriate on the present occasion. (See p. 105 of Notes) Later on in Act iv on p. 94 we get a description of the Nyagrodha tree on the bank of a lake and in Act vi on pp 156 and 157 we have a description of the lake agitated by Bhīmasena In both these there is nothing very striking

From the above survey of nature as it figures in the *Venīsamhāra* it cannot be said that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa possessed any very great love for nature. His attitude towards nature was of the conventional type and there was nothing very distinguishing about it.

IX BHATTA NĀRĀYAṆA'S LITERARY STYLE

Literary style is in Sanskrit known as *rīti* and is defined as a particular arrangement of words intended to help the development of sentiments ^(t) From very early times different kinds of style were prevalent, but as Dandin remarks only two of these can sharply be distinguished viz Vaidarbhi and Gaudi, ^(u) Bhāmaha (i. 31-32) also mentions the same two Vāmana and Rājasekhara give three kinds of style, ^(v) adding Pāñcālī to the two admitted by Bhāmaha and Dandin The Agnipurāṇa (adhyāya 340), Rudrata in his Kāvya-lamkāra (il. 4 and 6) and Viśvanātha in his Sāhityadarpana ^(w) speak of four kinds, mentioning Lāṭikā as the fourth. Bhoja in his Sarasvatikanthābharana enu-

(t) Read —

(1) 'विशिष्टा पदरचना रीति' वामन's काव्यालंकारसूत्र 1 2 7

(2) 'वचनविन्यासक्रमो रीति' राजशेखर's काव्यमीमांसा p 9

(3) 'पदसंयुता रीतिरङ्गसंख्याविशेषवत् ।

उपक्रमो रसादीनाम् ॥

साहित्यदर्पण ix. 1

(u) Vide —

अस्तमेव गिरा नार्गं सूक्तमेव परस्परम् ।

तत्र वैदर्भी गौडी च पाञ्चाली लटिका तया ॥

—काव्यादर्श 1 40

(v) See —

(1) 'सा निदा वैदर्भी गौडीया पाञ्चाली च' काव्यालंकारसूत्र 1. 2 9

(2) 'उपपत्तु निव.' काव्यमीमांसा p 10

(w) Note —

सा [रीति] पुन स्यादुर्विधा ॥ 1

वैदर्भी चाय गौडी च पाञ्चाली लटिका तया । 2

—साहित्यदर्पण ix

merates six, which are Vaidarbhī, Pāñcālī, Gaudīyā, Āvan-
tikā, Lāṭiyā and Māgadhī (x)

The number of the kinds of literary style thus varies from two to six. Of these only two deserve special notice viz. Vaidarbhī and Gaudī. The principal characteristics of the Vaidarbhī style are graceful arrangement of words characterised by sweet syllables and absence of long compounds. Compositions in Vaidarbhī style create the same pleasure as the notes of a lute (y) It is generally regarded as the best of styles (z) The Gaudī style on the other hand

(x) Read —

वदर्मादिभूत पन्था काव्ये मार्ग इति स्मृत ।
रीड् गताविति यातो सा व्युत्पन्था रीतिरुच्यते ॥ 27
वेदर्मा साथ पाश्वाली गोडीयावन्तिका तथा ।
लाटीया मागधी चेति षोढा रीतिर्निगद्यते ॥ 28

—सरस्वतीकण्ठाभरण 11

(y) Note —

(1) श्लेष समाद समता माधुर्य सुकुमारता ।
अर्थव्यक्तिरुदारतरमोज नान्तिसमाधय ॥ 41
इति वेदर्ममार्गस्य भाषा दश गुणा स्मृता ।
एषा विपर्यय बायो लक्ष्यते गोडवर्त्मनि ॥ 42

—काव्यादर्श 1

(2) अस्मृष्टा देवमात्राभि समग्रगुणशुम्भिता
विपञ्चीस्वरसौभाग्या वेदर्मी रीतिरिष्यते ॥ 21

—under काव्यालंकारसूत्र 1 2 11

(3) तत्रासमासा नि शेषश्लेषादिगुणशुम्भिता ।
विपञ्चीस्वरसौभाग्या वेदर्मी रीतिरिष्यते ॥ 21

—सरस्वतीकण्ठाभरण 11

(4) माधुर्यव्यञ्जकैर्वर्णै रचना ललितात्मिका ॥ 2
अवृत्तिरल्पवृत्तिर्वा वेदर्मी रीतिरिष्यते । ...3

—साहित्यदर्पण 1x

(z) Bilhana in his Vikramāṅkadevacarita (1 9) praises the Vaidarbhī style in the following stanza —

अनन्रवृष्टि श्रयणाश्रुतस्य सरस्वतीविभ्रमजन्मभूमि ।
वेदर्मरीति, कृतिनामुदेति सोभाग्यलामप्रतिभू पदानाम् ॥

possesses ojas or force or vigour as its main characteristic. This force is brought out by pompous arrangement of words and by the use of long compounds and high-sounding expressions ^(a)

As Bhatta Nārāyaṇa was a Gauda, it was natural that his drama should exhibit characteristics of the Gaudī style more than those of any other. But he does not write in this style alone. No poet in fact can confine himself entirely to only one kind of style. Some of the good points of the Vaidarbhī style are also found in the Venīsamhāra.

Having made these general observations on style, we shall now proceed to point out the special characteristics of the literary style of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. The first characteristic then that strikes us is the force with which the poet writes. Whatever may be his meaning, he conveys it home to us with great force. He appears to express himself with strokes of hammer as it were. His style is, as Wilson happily says, 'rather powerful than polished.'^(aa) This is seen

(a) See —

- (1) ओज कान्तिमती गौडीया ॥ १२ ॥ ओजश्च कान्तिश्च विद्येते यस्यां मा
ओज कान्तिमती गौडीया नाम रीति । माधुर्यसौकुमार्ययोरभावात् ।
सनासबहुला अत्युत्पणपदा च । अत्र श्लोक —

ममस्तावुत्पणपदानोज कान्तिगुणान्विताम् ।

गौडीयामिति गच्छन्ति रीतिं रीतिविचक्षणा ॥

—काव्यालंकारसूत्र १. २

- (2) ओज प्रकाशकैर्बर्जितैर्बन्धआहम्पर * पुन ॥ ३

सनासबहुला गौडी

—साहित्यदर्पण १५

* Pompous, showy, magnificent

- (3) बहुतरमनान्युक्ता मुमहाभागाक्षरा च गौडीया ।

रीतिदुर्गासमहिमपरवन्ता स्तोत्रवाक्या च ॥

—quoted under साहित्यदर्पण १५ ३

(aa) Vide Select Specimens of the Theatre of the Hindus
Vol II, p 343

especially in the passages that develop the heroic sentiment. Many of the stanzas of Bhīmasena are good examples of the force of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's style and of Gaudī style generally ^(b) But even in pathetic passages this force makes its presence felt and renders the pathos more powerful and impressive. This characteristic of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's style makes it an excellent vehicle of what Wilson has called 'the poetry of passion,' with which the drama is full.

Another peculiarity of Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's style is that he knew the art of making the sound an echo of the sense. Two expedients are generally practised for doing this viz. the use of appropriate-sounding words and the employment of appropriate metres. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa resorts to both these. Thus the stanza i. 21 (Cañcadbhujabhramita etc.) with its harsh-sounding syllables is well calculated to bring out the heroic sentiment that inspires Bhīmasena. The following stanza i. 22 (Manthāyastārnavāmbhah etc.) is again so worded that as it is uttered we feel the sensation of a drum sounding. Similarly, Asvatthāman's stanza iii 4 (Mahāpralayamāruta etc.) definitely gives us the impression of a loud noise even by means of its sound. As regards the employment of appropriate metres the best example appears to us to be ii. 21 (Kuru ghanoru padāni etc.), where the Drutavilambita so clearly suggests the action of some one leading another slowly and slowly. The Mandākrāntā in iv. 15 (Adyaivāvam ranamupagatau etc.) is best suited to bring out the pathos of Duryodhana's condition and the Harinī in vi 24 (Mama hi vayasā etc.) brings out the affectionate attitude of ardent and sincere imploration of Yudhisthira as no other metre would have done. The

(b) Stanza i. 21 has actually been quoted by the Sāhityadarpaṇa as an illustration of Gaudī-rīti. Other stanzas falling under the same category are i. 22, ii 19, iii 4 and v 35.

Praharsinī along with the appropriate-sounding words in ii. 29 (Udghātakṛāṇita etc) well brings out the idea of a chariot moving on uneven ground and producing the jingling of bells at every jolt Other examples of these two expedients may easily be found by a reader who has carefully studied and appreciated the drama

The third peculiarity of the poet's style is the ease with which most of his stanzas are understood. Prasāda or perspicuity, the quality which makes the reader understand the meaning of a stanza even as it is read, is found in most of the stanzas in the Venīsamhāra. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa was also fond of jingling assonances of sounds and often resorts to alliteration and rhyme in order to produce that effect ^(c) But sometimes he is much too carried away by this fondness and uses expressions which appear distinctly to have been used for rhyme only ^(d) Balanced construction, sometimes based upon contrast, is also met with ^(e)

A further notable peculiarity of which the poet appears to be especially fond is the employment of kaku or the question of appeal This device is intended to give emphasis and force to the statement concerned and has been used by Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa quite a number of times in his drama In the very first Act it occurs no less than thirteen times No other poet to our knowledge uses kaku so often as Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa.

(c) See for example 'आये कर्ण कर्णसुवर्दा गिरसुहिरन् । अकृताप्रिय प्रिय इत्यनेनसत्तल विलास दानि ॥' v 14, 'कृत्वा वेशेऽपि कृता कीधवहो कृशशालभ-कुलावतदा ॥' v 29, 'पतिम्यां मद्भुजाभ्यां भ्रमिन्गुरुगदा अनुमविता भूयः भनिमसिन्' v 35, 'कर्णेन कर्णसुभान्' v 38, 'प्रिये प्रायस्तस्य' vi 5, 'एत-ज्जलजनीलविनेचनाय मीनाय मे' vi 30.

(d) Notice 'अविनयनौसर्गधार कर्ण' p 114 and 'आक्रान्तपरशुरामाभिरामवशा' p 145 and see our notes on these expressions

(e) Vide ii 2, 11 and 23, iii 44 and v 21.

Bhatta Nārāyana uses a large number of rhetoric figures to embellish his style. Thus Ullekha (i 3), Paramparita-rūpaka (i 4, iii. 23cd), ^(f) Upamā (i 5 and 14), Ślesa (i. 6 and 7), mixture of Upamā and Rūpaka (i. 19), Samastavastuvisaya Sānga Rūpaka (i 25), ^(g) Upamā and Samāsokti (ii 8), Virodha (ii 11), Gamyotpreksā (ii 13), Rūpaka and Upamā (ii 19), Kāvya-linga and Apahnuṭi (ii 20), Vibhāvanā or Nidarsanā (iii. 8), Paryāyokti (iii 42), ^(h) Sahokti (v 36), Rūpaka (vi. 1), Dīpaka (vi 17), Atīśayokti (vi. 26) and Arthāpatti (vi 43) are some of the figures that easily occur to one's mind. Parikara, which consists in the employment of significant words, seems to be the poet's favourite, for it is often met with ⁽ⁱ⁾ Some of Bhatta Nārāyana's Arthāntaranyāsas are extremely beautiful ^(j) The poet also has enriched the language with

(f) Paramparita-rūpaka is also found in the three vocatives of the sun on p 41 viz अम्बरमहासरपकसहस्रपत्र, पूर्वदिशावधूमखमण्डल बुद्धमविशेषक and सकलभुवनाङ्गनदीपक

(g) Another notable example of समस्तवस्तुविषय साङ्ग रूपक is supplied by Sundaraka's sentence on p 102 beginning with 'तस्य खल्विदं निर्मातृविदुरवचनबीजस्य'

(h) Another good example of पर्यायोक्त is Buddhimatikā's speech 'अयि भानुमते, युष्माकममुक्तेषु केशहस्तेषु कथमस्माकं देव्या केशा सयम्यन्ते।' p 18

(i) Note Aśvatthāman's words to Karna on p 89, which are all significant, viz, 'अङ्गराज, सेनापते, जामदग्न्यशिष्य, द्रोणोपहासिन्, भुजबलपरिरक्षितसकललोक' Bhīmasena's speech from behind the curtain on p 93 is also full of significant words. Similarly, Bhīmasena's description of Duryodhana in v. 26 is again couched in significant expressions

(j) See especially i 20; ii. 3 and the following line

some quotable lines and phrases of 'general application, ^(h) of which even Kālidāsa might well be proud

Turning now to the points of weakness of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa as a literary artist, we first note that he does not seem to be always at ease when writing. The poet does not seem to wield a facile pen everywhere. Many a time his constructions are artificial and laboured and in some places they become involved. A distinct tendency to verboseness is seen in many places. Clumsy and awkward expressions are often found and ill-formed compounds are sometimes met with ^(l) A fondness for the unnecessary use of the preposition *prati* is also noticeable ^(m)

Bhatta Nārāyaṇa lived in an age when Dandin's dictum that *ojas* or profuseness of compounds formed the

- (k) All *subhūsitās* in the drama are collected in Appendix—C to our edition of the *Venīsamhāra*. The following will perhaps bear repetition here

- (1) अतुलवर्धनीय सदाचार ।
- (2) अहो मुग्धत्वमवलानां नाम ।
- (3) आशा बलवती राजन् ।
- (4) दैवायत्त कुले जन्म ।
- (5) यस्तु घृतरुं दुग्धरसमयसितम् ।
- (6) स्वयञ्च जनं नि न गन्तुं प्रेक्षते ।

- (l) As an example of clumsy expression we may quote 'तदादेश्य तमुदेश यत्रस्था मातुमती' p 30, where *यत्रस्था* should really be *यत्र निष्ठति* सावेक्ष compounds, involving awkward *एकदेशी* *अन्वय*, are sometimes found. Vide ii 22 and vi 8 and our notes thereon. 'मादृशे भृत्यवर्गे' p 155 is a glaring instance of an unjustifiable *एकदेशी* *अन्वय*. For, it will be noticed *मादृश* goes only with *भृत्य* in the compound *भृत्यवर्गे*

- (m) Note 'शिबिरं प्रति प्रस्थातुमामत्य' p 2, 'चतु शालकं प्रति प्रस्थित' p 5 and 'मुयोधनं प्रति प्रहित' p 6

essence of prose ⁽ⁿ⁾ prevailed. Consequently he tried to use as many big compounds as possible, especially in the prose passages, in order to make them vigorous or powerful. But the poet apparently did not realise that this dictum had limitations, especially in a drama, which pretended to be realistic. Consequently his prose, with its long compounds, looks unnatural. Bhavabhūti was of course a much greater sinner in this respect than our poet.

Then again in the *Veṅṛisambhāra* we have evidence of the poet's careless writing in many places ^(o) Rules of

(n) Read —

ओजः समासभूयस्त्वमेतद्दयस्य जीवितम् ।

पदेऽप्यदाक्षिणाद्यानामिदमेकं परायणम् ॥

—काव्यादर्श १ 80

- (o) Instances of these have been duly pointed out in the Notes. Attention may here be drawn to a few cases. In ii 10 and iii 29 Duryodhana begins by referring to himself in the plural and then speaks of himself in the singular in the same stanzas. In ii 22 Duryodhana speaks of Bhūnumati in the third person as 'अस्या मृगाक्ष्या', but in the sentence which just precedes this stanza he has addressed her as 'भवति'. A most glaring instance of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's careless and confused style is supplied by iii 24 and the prose passage that precedes it — As examples of careless expressions we may note 'मध्यमपाण्डव' (p 115) in the sense of Bhīmasena, 'तृतीयस्तेऽनुज' (p 170) in the sense of Arjuna with reference to Yudhiṣṭhira and the expressions 'प्रातृशत' (iii 17) and 'सुतशत' (v 3) in the sense of 99 Kauravas — Tautologous expressions like 'अन्यस्मिन्नपि जन्मान्तरे' p 102 and 'कर्णाशी-विषभोगिनि' vi 1 must also be put down to the poet's careless writing.

grammar, both in the matter of the formation of words and of syntax, are found to be violated on some occasions ^(p)

There is nothing very striking in Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's vocabulary and selection of words. He had no *penchant* for difficult and out-of-the-way words, such as Bhavabhūti had. In this he resembles Kālidāsa who, though using a large number of words, hardly, if ever, employs a word of unusual occurrence when a simpler one is available.

- (p) For Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's violence of grammar see above foot-note (s) p 16. Also note 'तद्वदेव प्रकृतिस्तु नारमात्मनः खेदयितुम्' p 42, where the infinitive 'खेदयितुम्' is ungrammatical for the grammatically correct gerund 'खेदयित्वा'. Similarly in 'अन्तर्यर्थनात्मनः शोकानन्दे प्रवेष्टुम्' p 79, 'प्रवेष्टुम्' should be 'प्रवेष्टुम्' 'अरातिस्तुनस्तुन' (ii 2), 'स्तुन' (ii 21) and 'आप्तस्तुनम्' (iii 21) are also inaccurate from the strict grammatical point of view. The infinitive 'अप्यवसितुम्' in the famous 'यस्तु स्मरन् स्मरन् अप्यवसितुम्' is a grammatical blunder. The correct form is अप्यवसितुम्. The word स्मर has been used in the neuter in v 21, though it is masculine. The compound मवन्निष्ठ in v 9 is grammatically incorrect.

X BHATTA NĀRĀYAṆA AND BHAVABHŪTI

In determining the date of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa we remarked above (p 18) that the style and general construction of the *Venīsamhāra* show that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa belonged to the age of Bhavabhūti. In this Section we desire to indicate the points of similarity and contrast between these two poets.

First then both Bhavabhūti and Bhatta Nārāyaṇa are proficient in the delineation of pathos. Against the strict rule of dramaturgy, which says that either the love or the heroic sentiment should be principal in a drama,^(g) Bhatta Nārāyaṇa has made *karuṇa* or pathos the prevailing sentiment in his *Venīsamhāra*. Bhavabhūti has done the same in his *Uttararāmacarita*, where also the principal sentiment is *karuṇa*. Both of them show skill in the delineation of other sentiments, but it must be admitted that Bhavabhūti is a greater master of this art than Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. Bhavabhūti, it is true, found ample opportunities for the delineation of different sentiments in his three dramas. Bhatta Nārāyaṇa with only one drama to his credit did not have so many. All the same it cannot be questioned that though Bhatta Nārāyaṇa may sometimes rise to Bhavabhūti's level, the author of the *Venīsamhāra* cannot be put down as an equal of the author of the *Uttararāmacarita*.

Secondly, both these poets are unsuccessful in the development of the plot and in the arrangement of the various incidents constituting it. Both of them were not

(g) Vide foot-note (p) above on p 94.

able to evolve out of the materials chosen by them a well-connected story fit for dramatic purposes. In his Mahāvīracarita and Uttararāmacarita Bhavabhūti resorted to the Rāmāyana for his plot, even as Bhatta Nārāyana turned to the other great national epic for the plot of his Venīsamhāra. This certainly acted as a handicap in the case of both these poets for the proper development of the plot. But Bhavabhūti suffered no such disadvantage in his Mālatīmādhava. But even there he has not been able to evolve out of the various incidents a harmonious story. Both Bhatta Nārāyana and Bhavabhūti were in short defective in dramatic construction. As dramatic artists both cannot be said to be very successful.

We have seen above (p 125) that Bhatta Nārāyana displays close acquaintance with the technique of scenic representation on the stage. Bhavabhūti also, we know from his own statements,^(r) was friendly with actors and consequently must have been familiar with the requirements of a drama for success in a theatre. In spite of their knowledge of the technical side of dramatic representation both the poets have not been successful in giving us plays that would be successful on the stage. Bhavabhūti's Uttararāmacarita for example is considered to be more a dramatic poem than a poetic drama. Perhaps the same may be said with regard to the Venīsamhāra of Bhatta Nārāyana.

It has been shown above that Bhatta Nārāyana lacked sense of proportion.^(s) The same accusation is levelled against Bhavabhūti.

(r) Read — 'मयभूतिनाम जतुवर्णीयुः कविर्निर्धेयमस्माकम्' महावीरचरित-
प्रस्तावना, 'मयभूतिनाम जातुवर्णीयुः कविर्निर्गमसौहृदेन भरतेषु' मालतीमाधव-
प्रस्तावना

(s) Vide pp 124-125 above

In the matter of their literary style Bhatta Nārāyaṇa and Bhavabhūti resemble most. Both write a rough and rugged style, clearly distinguishable from the polished and elegant style of Kālidāsa. Both show fondness for long compounds and many a time use more words than are necessary. Both display skill in the art of making the sound an echo of the sense. Both seem clearly to be under the influence of Dandin's dictum regarding profuseness of compounds forming the essence of prose.

It will thus be seen that as dramatists Bhatta Nārāyaṇa and Bhavabhūti resemble each other in many respects. It would therefore not be wrong to say that both belonged to the same literary age.

In the above paragraphs we have shown that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa resembles Bhavabhūti in many respects. That has been done to prove that both of them belonged to the same age. But it must not be inferred therefrom that we consider Bhatta Nārāyaṇa to be Bhavabhūti's equal as a poet. There are points in which they differ and in which Bhavabhūti is far superior to Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. In fairness to Bhavabhūti we must say a few words about these points as well.

Even in the matter of literary style in which the two poets resemble most, Bhavabhūti impresses us as a greater artist. His vocabulary is much larger than that of Bhatta Nārāyaṇa and he seems to wield greater command over the language than the author of the *Venīsamhāra*.

As a poet of nature Bhavabhūti far surpasses Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. The love for the grand and sublime in nature that we see in Bhavabhūti's plays is nowhere visible in the *Venīsamhāra*. The close observation of varied nature and natural phenomena that we find in Bhavabhūti is not

met with in Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. As a matter of fact as we saw before⁽¹⁾ Bhatta Nārāyaṇa does not distinguish himself very much as a poet of nature.

As a delineator of human passions and emotions and especially of the tender feelings of the human heart Bhavabhūti once more surpasses Bhatta Nārāyaṇa. Bhavabhūti's conception of conjugal love is perhaps the grandest and the most sublime that we have in Sanskrit dramatic poetry. The love that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa deals with in his second Act is of the sensual kind. There is no doubt Bhavabhūti possessed far greater knowledge of the workings of human hearts than Bhatta Nārāyaṇa.

(1) Vide p. 127 above

XI SOCIETY IN BHATTA NĀRĀYAṆA'S DAYS

In composing a drama such as the *Venīsamhāra* a poet can have no intention of portraying a picture of contemporary society. In fact it would be his endeavour to make his picture correspond as closely as possible to the society of the days to which the plot of his drama belongs. Yet it is always possible to get a few glimpses of contemporary society from the study of a poet's works. For, though the poet may not consciously desire it, contemporary society is to a certain extent reflected in his works.

First, then, as regards the state of religious beliefs in Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's days, we have already seen in the first Section of this Study that the two prevailing religions were Brahmanism and Buddhism. While Buddhism was powerful at Kanauj and went to the length of persecuting the followers of the Vedic religion,^(u) Brahmanism found support in Bengal where it was followed in its ancient form viz. the performance of sacrifices. The fact that Bhatta Nārāyaṇa compares war with a sacrifice^(v) shows that the performance of sacrifices was a common occurrence. There is also a reference to oblations being offered in blazing fire.^(w) The cult of bhakti or devotion to Viṣṇu also prevailed. The two deities, that prominently received worship, were Viṣṇu and Śiva. The sun too was an object of adoration.^(x) The pantheon included some other deities

(u) It must be stated here that there are no references to Buddhism in the *Venīsamhāra*.

(v) Vide foot-note (o) on p. 13 above.

(w) See 'आदृतिरूपेण प्रज्वलितेन भगवता दत्ताशनेन च नश्यतु ।' Act II, p. 37

(x) Read 'दशे तस्यैव, उपनय मेऽर्च्यभाजन यावद् भगवतः सहस्ररश्मेः सपर्या निर्वर्तयामि ।' Act II, p. 40

as well ^(x) Even as now flowers formed the principal material with which deities were worshipped. ^(y)

Various religious rites and vows were evidently in vogue Their observance was supposed to be efficacious in securing desired objects It was not necessary that the person, who was to achieve the object, should himself perform the rites or observe the vows Some other person could do so in his interest For we remember in the second Act Bhānumatī undertakes to observe certain vows in order to ensure victory for her husband in the war ^(z) Gifts to Brāhmanas was another form of religious charity. ^(a) Nāma-sankīrtana or muttering of a deity's name was also supposed to be effective from the religious point of view ^(b) Personal decorations were discarded while engaged in religious observances ^(c)

Among religious practices must be included the performance of funeral rites and the presentation of obsequial water to the dead ^(d) Cremation was the prevalent method

(x) Note 'हजे तरालिक्के, उपनय मे कुम्भमानि वाषट्परासामपि देवतानां सपर्यां निर्घर्तयामि।' Act 11, p 41

(y) Vide the preceding foot-note and : 1

(z) Read 'एषा मातुमती देवी पत्यु समराविजयाशसया अय प्रभृति आरब्धनियमा बालोयाने तिष्ठति।' Act 11, p 26, आर्यपुत्र, अभ्यनुज्ञातायास्त्वया आस्ति मे कस्मिन्नपि नियमेऽभिलाष ।' Act 11, p 42 and 'किन्तु आर्यपुत्रस्यैव मनोरथसंपत्तिमाभिनन्दामि।' Act 11, p 43

(a) Note 'तदेवतानां प्रणामेन द्विजातिजनप्रतियद्देण च अन्तर्धत्ताम् ।'

Act 11, p 38

(b) See 'येनायामपि प्रतिष्ठापयन्त्यो प्रशसया देवतासंकीर्तनेन च परिहारिष्याय ।'

Act 11 p. 28

(c) Read 'यक्केन्दु ते नियममुपितालक्कत्ताङ्गाधर वा' 11 18c

d) Note 'अग्रन्मिथ्र कथचिद्दत्तु जलममी धान्यया बान्धवेभ्य ' v 36a and 'वितुर्मप्य वारिद्' v1 24d In Act vi Yudhiṣṭhira offers water to his ancestors and to Bhīmasena who was reported to him to be dead Vide p 184 (Text).

of disposing of the dead bodies.^(c) In the performance of the śrāddha water was offered to three immediate ancestors, who are known to constitute a pūrvaṇa, even as in modern days.^(d) Women also offered obsequial water to dead relatives.^(e)

The belief that some kind of impurity, called *mrtā-sauca*, attached to the relatives of the dead, was held in those days even as in these. For, we find the demon *Cārvika* refuses to take water from Yudhishthira on the ground that his relatives must be dying every day in the battle that is proceeding ^(h)

- (e) Read 'युधिष्ठिर उवाच । अत्र पितृणां शान्तिः । यत्किञ्चित् कुरुते । तदा मया प्रणम्य ।' v 36b
- (f) In Act vi Yudhiṣṭhira offers water to his father, grand-father and great-grand-father. Read 'एव तावत् सलिलाब्धौ । नृपतये । अत्र प्रपितामहाय शान्तनवे । अवमपि पितामहाय निविशन्निर्वाहम् । (मायम्) ततस्तप्तमानाम् । अथ तावत् स्वर्गस्थिताय । इत्युवाचे विप्र पाण्डवे ।।' Act vi p 184 Yudhiṣṭhira's three immediate ancestors were Pāṇdu, Vicitravīrya and Śāntanu. The correct form of the name of his great-grand-father is Śāntanu. The Kumbhakonum edition of the Mahābhārata, however, gives in one place (Adiparvan 63.19) the form Śāntanu—Yudhiṣṭhira begins this presentation of cavity-fulls of water with Bhīṣma, because Bhīṣma was to him an object of great veneration. Then again though at this time, Bhīṣma was alive, he was considered as good as dead, because he was lying on a bed of arrows, waiting for the proper opportunity to die.—Note that the above passage is incorrectly printed in our text on p. 184 and that the translation given there is also incorrect. The student can easily correct it with the proper punctuations given above.
- (g) Note Yudhiṣṭhira's words to Draupadī 'कृष्णे, त्वमपि देहि सलिलाब्धौ' Act vi. p. 185
- (h) Read 'मुग्धस्रग् व्यजनविनाश संघाभेष्ट प्रति'

The practice of making conditional offers to deities with a view to secure desired objects, called *navasa* in Marāṭhī, was in vogue,⁽¹⁾ exactly as it is in modern times

Some information regarding the secular life of the people can also be had from the *Venīsamhāra*. Belief in dreams and omens such as the throbbing of the eye, as indicative of future events, was common. Bhānumatī dreams an ominous dream and is exceedingly upset thereby (p 27). It was however believed that evils indicated by ominous dreams could be averted by religious practices such as the eulogy of gods and the muttering of the names of the deities.⁽²⁾ Warriors like Duryodhana (p 38) and Asvatthāman (p 61) feel the throbbing of their left eye and are perturbed on that account. Yudhiṣṭhira on the other hand experiences the throbbing of his right eye and consequently believes that some stroke of good fortune is near (p 186). It is interesting to note that this belief in dreams and the throbbing of the eye continues unabated even in modern times.

Movements of the stars in the sky were supposed to exercise influence over the lives of human beings, even as now. But evidently a healthy school of thinkers was springing up. They believed there was no truth whatsoever in the suggestive character of dreams and omens. Only the timid were frightened by such things. If at any time movements of stars, dreams, omens and conditional offers

(1) Note the occurrence of the word *upayācitam* in 11 15

(2) Read —

सरसी—यद्येव तद् कथयतु प्रियसरसी । येनायामपि प्रतिष्ठापयन्त्यो प्रशसया देयतास-
कीर्तनेन च परिहरिष्याव ।

चेटी—देवि एवमेतद् । अशुशलदर्शना अपि स्वप्ना प्रशसया कुशलपरिणामा भवन्तीति
श्रूयते ।

bore fruit, such phenomenon must be considered to be purely fortuitous ^(k)

Caste system was prevalent and Brāhmanas were regarded as specially entitled to respect. But the castes evidently were not the water-tight compartments of society that they are supposed to be at present. Even sages, for example, felt no scruples in accepting water from Ksatriyas to allay their thirst. Cārvāka is ready to drink water that is brought by Yudhisthira's chamberlain. Only when he comes to know that Yudhisthira as a Ksatriya is likely to be contaminated by mrtāsaucha that he refuses to drink it (p 165).

The practice of committing suicide on the death of a loved relative, ^(l) called Sati when the person committing suicide is a wife, was in vogue in Bhatta Nārāyana's days. Such suicide was supposed to secure for the person dying union with the dead person in the other world. While wandering on the battle-field Sundaraka came across a scene wherein the mother and wife of a dead warrior were dying after him ^(m). The readiness of Yudhisthira

(k) Note ' (वामाक्षिस्तन्दन सूचयित्वा) आ कथं ममापि नाम दुर्योधनस्यानिमिच्छानि दृश्यक्षीममावहन्ति । (सावटम्भम् । अथवा भीरुजनहृदयप्ररम्भनेषु का गणना दुर्योधनन्वेषयिषेत् । गतिश्चायमर्थोऽङ्घ्रिरसा ।

ग्रहणां चरितं स्वप्नो निमिच्छान्प्रयाचितम् ।

कलान्ति काफतालीय तस्य प्राज्ञा न विम्यति ॥ १५ ॥

Act II, pp 38-39

(l) It is a mistake to suppose, as many do, that only wives committed suicide on the death of their husbands in ancient India. Suicide was committed by other relatives and even friends also. Compare 'यदेतद्गुमरणं नाम तदतिनिष्फलम् । .मौर्ख्यस्वलितमिदं यद्वपस्ते पितरि भ्रातरि सहृदि मर्तरि वा प्राणा परित्यज्यन्ते ।' वाण-कादम्बरी p 173 (Peterson)

(m) Read 'हा अतिक्रुण खल्वयं वर्तते । एषा वीरमाता समराचिनिहत पुत्रकं श्रुत्वा रक्तांशुकान्निवसनया समग्रभूषणया यध्या सहागुम्रियते । (सश्लाघम्) साधु वीरमाता साधु । अन्यस्मिन्नपि जन्मान्तरं जन्मिषुपुत्रका मयि भविष्यति ।' Act IV, p. 102

known in the time of the Mahābhārata, nor does it appear to be prevalent in Bhatta Nārāyaṇa's days. But widows apparently were not allowed to use the bodice to cover their bosom. For, in the account of the dream of Bhānumatī the removal of her breast-garment is meant to be a definite indication of the infliction of widow-hood on her (s).

Medical and surgical science had apparently made considerable advance. Arrow-heads were extracted from the bodies by means of powerful pincers and wounds were properly dressed (1). Roads were evidently in good condition and sand was spread on them (u).

(s) Read 'नकुलेन पक्षगशतयथ स्तनाशुकापहरणं चेति नियतमनिष्टोदकं तर्कयामि।'

Act II, p. 38

(t) Note 'कथमेने खलु स्वामिनो गाढप्रहारहतस्य धनसञ्चाहजालदुर्भेद्यमुखे कङ्क-
वदनेर्द्विदयाच्छलयान्मुद्धरन्ति।' Act IV, p. 101 and

शल्लयानि व्यपनीय कङ्कवदनेरुन्मोचिते कङ्कटे
वद्धेषु व्रणपट्टकेषु शनैः कर्णे कृतापाश्रय । v 1ab

(u) See 'झाङ्गरी शर्कराल पेवेषु' II 19, which tells us that the tempestuous wind blowing along roads was charged with sand

XII THE MODE OF ANCIENT WARFARE

The Venīsamhāra deals with the story of the Mahābhārata war and it is therefore possible to get some idea of ancient warfare from its study. In this Section we propose to put down what we learn about ancient warfare from the Venīsamhāra

The army consisted of four constituents viz. elephants, chariots, horses and foot-soldiers^(r) It was consequently known as *caturangam balam* Great warriors used to fight from chariots and were known as *mahārathas*^(x) In the order of their eminence warriors were known as *rathin*, *mahāratha* and *atiratha*^(y) Chariots were decked with golden bells, garlands of flowers and chowries^(y) They carried golden pitchers of water as a mark of auspiciousness and flew a flag, marked with a special emblem, which proclaimed who the chariot-fighter was^(z)

Weapons of various kinds were used. Of these the bow and the arrows, the mace and the sword were the principal. Javelins (*tomarah*) and a weapon known as *sakti* were also in use^(a) What the exact form of the *sakti* was is not quite

(r) Read 'कथं द्विरदतुरगनचरणचारिणा .. महाकाशे दलानाद्' p 62, 'हन्गजवाजिनरकलेवरनहनसन्दे' p 92 and 'उभयदलनिर्दक्षिमान-करितुरगपदातिचक्षुश्चूलिनिकरेण दर्शनचक्षुर्गजघटाक्षपानेन च' p 105

(w) Note 'कथमेते महायथा वर्गद्वयोऽपि' p 62

(x) See iii 28 wherein Drona is referred to as *atiratha*

(y) Vide 'उद्धातकपित्तिलिलेहेनचण्ड भालन्धद्रिगितचानरप्रशक्त' i ii 29; 'चूतकलकलकिङ्किणीजालनालिना रथेन' p 92

(z) Read 'पल्लवपल्लवान्चुन्दितकनककनकपङ्कजानां शिवरात्रद्वैजयन्तीसुचि-तेन .. रथेन' p 92

(a) Read 'भो भो, अस्मदर्थेनयस्मद्विद्वत्कारुणिककृपागतो नरशक्तयः कौत्सवद्भट्टा' p 93

clear. It was apparently a pointed weapon, furnished with golden bells and studded with jewels. It blazed in its career towards the target ^(b) We are told Arjuna threw a śakti at Vrsasena, who cut it into three with a crescent-shaped arrow ^(c) We know from the Mahābhārata that Karna killed Ghatotkaca by means of a śakti, which had been obtained from Indra and had been reserved for Arjuna.

Besides these certain consecrated weapons, called astras, were used ^(d) Apparently they were simple arrows that received miraculous powers when consecrated by the muttering of sacred charms. Separate charms were necessary for their discharge and withdrawal.

But the chief weapons were the bow and the arrows. Archers were so skilful in discharging arrows that it was impossible to observe when they drew them out of the quiver, placed them on the bow-string, took the aim and discharged them at the enemy ^(e) A wonderfully large supply of arrows was evidently carried by each great warrior in his chariot. Thus we find that Kṛpa stopped the progress of hostile troops by 'a shower of arrows' (p. 92) and Karna also 'rained a shower of arrows' (p. 104) when he attacked Bhimasena. Vrsasena covered Arjuna's chariot with dark-coloured arrows as a tree in blossom is covered with bees (p. 107) Later on the same young

(b) Note 'ततश्च देव .. विरीटिना गृहीता रथोत्सङ्गात् कणत्कनककिङ्किणीजाल-
झङ्कारविराविणी .. निशितश्यामलस्निग्धमुखी विविधरत्नप्रभाभासुर-
भीषणरमणीयदर्शना शक्ति ' and 'प्रज्वलन्ती शक्ति प्रेक्ष्य ' p. 112

(c) See 'ततो देव, कुमारवृषसेनेनाकर्णाकृतानिशितसुरप्रेण .. अर्धपथ एव.... त्रिषा
कृता शक्तिः ' p. 113

(d) Note 'अस्त्रज्वालावलीढप्रतिबलजलपेरन्तरौर्वारिमाणे ' III. 7a and 'तान्ये-
षाहितशस्त्रघस्नरगुरुण्यस्त्राणि मास्यन्ति मे ' III 33c

(e) See 'अविज्ञातसंधानमोक्षनिक्षिप्तशरघारावर्षिणा ' p. 104 and 'अविभाषित-
तूणीरमुखधनुर्गुणगमनागमनशरसंधानमोक्षचटुलकरतलेन कुमारवृषसेनेन ' p. 109

warrior enveloped Arjuna's body with 'thousands of arrows' (p. 111). Arjuna of course was the most dexterous archer of them all. He was so quick in the discharge of arrows that in his fight with Karna and Virasena he arranged two rivers of arrows flowing in the direction of their chariots. At this time the arrows shot by Arjuna were so numerous that heaven and earth were filled therewith and nothing could be seen (p. 115)

These descriptions of the discharge of countless arrows, which are of course copied from the Mahābhārata, must be regarded as gross exaggerations. For otherwise we should have to suppose that the arrows of ancient times were rather harmless affairs. For how could a man, whose body was covered with thousands of arrows, remain alive?

Warriors used to wear armours ^(f) These apparently gave them protection against arrows, though many a time the armours were pierced through by the arrows

The bows were supplied with powerful strings which produced a twanging noise that resembled the thunder of clouds (p. 105). Scars were produced on the left wrists (II. 27) by the striking of the bow-strings and were regarded as decorations by warriors

Great commanders carried swords with them. The sword apparently was an emblem of office, even as in modern times. But the ancient sword was not the harmless thing of modern days. Dhrstadyumna cut the head of Drona with a sword (p. 59). When Asvatthāman and Karna fall out, they draw swords and become ready to kill each other (p. 85). Karna thinks of cutting Asvatthāman's raised foot with his sword (p. 85) and when Asvatthāman

(f) Read 'कङ्कटोन्मुक्तदेहे' II. 27 and वनसंज्ञाहजालद्रोम्यमुले कङ्कवदने ' p. 101

vows not to take any active part in the war, it is the sword that he throws down as a symbol of his abandonment of all weapons (p 87).

The mace was another common weapon. It was a weapon in which a few specialised Balarāma was the best mace-fighter of the time and both Bhīmasena and Duryodhana were his pupils in that art. Duryodhana possessed greater skill than Bhīmasena and was Balarāma's favourite pupil. Bhīmasena had strength on his side.^(g) The last fight of the war viz the fight between Bhīmasena and Duryodhana was a mace-fight. Of the younger warriors Vṛsasena was fond of mace-fight.^(h)

The battle-field presented a terrible appearance. Rivers of blood flew and a regular quagmire was produced from the blood, fat, flesh and marrow of men and animals killed. Chariots sometimes stuck in this and valiant foot-soldiers had to plant their feet on these chariots in order to effect further advance.⁽ⁱ⁾

The size of the armies was very large. The white umbrellas that were carried with them produced the illusion of a forest of white lotuses. As the armies moved from one place to another, or met in an encounter, huge clouds of dust were raised and the sun and even the entire sky were obscured.^(j)

There were certain laws of war that were scrupulously observed. Thus, every day the fight closed with the sun-

(g) See vi. 13 and 16

(h) Not 'गदायुद्धमिय' p 116, occurring in Duryodhana's lamentations addressed to Vṛsasena.

(i) Read i. 27 and pp 56-58.

(j) See ii. 27c and p 105

set and during the night people searched for the bodies of their dead relatives on the battle-field and consigned them to the fire (v 36) Surprise, which is regarded as the most important principle of modern war-fare, was looked down upon in epic India. It was unchivalrous to take the enemy unawares and to attack him while he was unprepared. Warriors therefore blew their conches to announce their arrival, when they wanted to attack an enemy (p. 106) Fights apparently took place at close quarters. For, before they actually commenced and even during their course, wordy defiances were thrown at each other by the combatants (pp 107-108, 111 and 114)

At the head of the army was the Commander-in-Chief. Dhrstadyumna was the Commander-in-Chief of the Pāndavas all through the war. The supreme command of the Kaurava army on the other hand passed successively from Bhīma to Drona, Karna, Śalya and Asvatthāman. It is impossible to find out what exactly was the relation of the Commander-in-Chief with the king and warriors of the royal family on the one hand and with other army commanders on the other. It would seem that the Commander-in-Chief's position was more of honour than of duty. He apparently had no control or authority over other commanders that were supposed to fight under him. For, had it not been so, Asvatthāman would never have dared to behave in the way he is depicted to have done in Act iii. Why was he allowed by King Duryodhana to flout the new Commander-in-Chief's authority and even to be ready to strike at him? Why did Duryodhana in his capacity as King, or Karna in his capacity as Commander-in-Chief, not put Asvatthāman under arrest and dismiss him from the army or order him to be executed for gross insubordination? Even the king was apparently helpless to prevent this unseemly quarrel between two of his best gene-

als Apart from the question as to who was the aggressor in this quarrel between Asvatthāman and Karna, the fact that such a quarrel at all took place shows that there was something fundamentally wrong with the army-organization of ancient India.

And that fundamental defect of ancient Indian armies was the absence of proper discipline. Discipline, which includes the subordination of personal interests and ambition, was apparently unknown in ancient India. Each commander fought more or less on his own and there was no central authority that exercised effective control over them all. Commanders apparently thought more about themselves and their interests than about the cause they were fighting for. Drona really had no business to lay down his arms when he learnt the news of the death of his beloved son. By doing so he showed that he valued private affection more than public duty. The same tendency is found in the history of Hindu India in recent times. On the same battle-field, hundreds of years after Drona, in 1761 A. D., Bhausaheb Peshwa acted in a similar manner. When Vishvasrao fell, he dismounted his elephant and sought his ruin. Here we had a repetition of the same deplorable preference shown to private grief at the cost of higher duties and responsibilities.

APPENDIX—A

The following stanzas are attributed to Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa in anthologies, but are not found in the extant text of the *Veṅiṣaṃhāra* .

(1) From the *Subhāsitāvali* —

79

उत्तिष्ठन्त्या रतान्ते भरमुरगपत्नौ पाणिनेकेन कृत्वा
धृत्वा चान्येन वासो विगलितरुबरीभारमसं वहन्त्या ।
भूयस्तत्कालकान्तिद्विगुणितमुरतप्रीतिना शौरिणा व
शम्यामालिङ्गन् नीत वपुःरलसलसद्वाहु लक्ष्म्या पुनातु ॥
भट्टनारायणस्य

141

एक दोषोऽत्र मया लभ्य इति सचिन्त्य चेतसा ।
खलु काव्येषु साधूना श्रवणाय प्रवर्तते ॥
भट्टनारायणस्य

149

यास्यति सज्जनहस्त रमयिष्यति न भवेच्च निर्दोषा ।
वत्पादितयापि कविस्ताम्यति कथया दुहित्रेव ॥
भट्टनारायणस्य

548

खरेरेवोदय श्लाघ्य कोऽन्येषामुद्यग्रह ।
न तर्मासि न तेजांसि यस्मिन्नभ्युज्जिते सति ॥

549

किमनेन न पर्याप्त कान्तत्व शशलक्ष्मणा ॥
ध्रुसंतप्तापि नलिनी यदिश्चासमुपागमत् ॥

550

फरान् प्रसार्य रविणा दक्षिणाशाबलाम्बिना ।
न केवलमनेनात्मा दिवसोऽपि लघुकृत ॥

551

वर्तते येन पाताङ्गि षण्मासान् द्वौ च वत्सरो ।
राशि स एव चन्द्रस्य न याति दिवसत्रयम् ॥

एते भट्टनारायणस्य

1591

ईर्ष्याप्रस्फुरिताधरौष्ठरुचक वक्त्र न मे दर्शित
साधिक्षेपपदा मनागपि गिरो न श्राविता मुग्धया ।
मद्दोषैः सरसै प्रतापितमनोवृत्त्यापि कोपोऽनया ।
काञ्च्या गाढतरावचद्भवसनग्रन्थ्या समावेदिते ।

नारायणस्य

(2) From the Śārngadharapaddhati.—

235

अन्तिष्ठन्त्या रतान्ते etc

निशानारायणस्य

4009

अशुद्रारकिताभिमन्युनिधनप्रोद्भूततविभ्रुव
पार्थस्याकृतशात्रवप्रतिकृतेरन्त शुचा मुह्यत ।
कीर्णा बाष्पकणौ पतन्ति धनुषि व्रीडाजडा दृष्टयो
हा वत्सेति गिर स्फुरन्ति न पुनर्नियान्ति वक्त्राद्बहिः ॥
निशानारायणस्य

(3) The following stanzas occur in anthologies as quotations from the Venisambhāra. They are not found in the extant text of the play, but they occur in a Telugu Ms of the drama. See p 21 of Critical Introduction by B. T Dravid alias Sheshadri Iyer and S T Dravid to their edition of the Venisambhāra (1896).

अशुद्रारकिताभिमन्युनिधन etc ॥ १ ॥
देवव्रते वाञ्छति दीर्घनिद्रा
द्रोणे च कर्णे च यशोऽवशेषे ।
लक्ष्मीसहायस्य तवाद्य वत्स
वात्सल्यवान् द्रोणिरेय सहायः ॥ २ ॥

स्वामी दुर्नयवारणव्यतिकरे शौर्योपदेशे गुरु-
 विन्ममे हृदय नियोगसमये दासो भये चाश्रयः ।
 दाता सप्तसमुद्रसीमरशनाद्रामाङ्किताया क्षितेः
 मर्वाकारमहीस्वयवरुहत् को वा न कर्णो मम ॥ ३ ॥ (५०३८)
 चक्र वा मधुहा कृतान्तगृहिणा दत्ताग्रपञ्चाङ्गुल
 वज्र भूधरपक्षशोणितसुरापानोन्मद वा वृषा ।
 शूल चासुररक्तविन्दुनिचित गृह्णातु शूलायुधो
 धृष्टद्युम्नमह निहन्मि ममेरु ऋश्रित् पारित्रायताम् ॥ ४ ॥ (३०१)

APP. INDEX B

[illegible]

7. The page after the next refers to the number of pages of the report on the subject of the mission.

[illegible]

शैल 16	नमाधिः 57	सुतनु 107
शौण्ड 157-158	सलिलस्तम्भनी 168	स्तन्यम् 163
सनिषङ्गम् 180	सविधाना 170	स्वत्य 22
सपत्नः 159-160	सावाहित्यम् 147	सैरम् 127
समन्तपञ्चकम् 165	उगृहीतनामधेय 178	

